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IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A TEST.
BUT SECURITY GETS PRETTY LAX IN AMERICA'S INTERIOR STATES, WHERE FUEL COMPANIES PRETTY MUCH OWN THE GOVERNMENT.
SO THE NUCLEAR ACCIDENT DIDN'T SURPRISE MANY PEOPLE. MAYBE THE TEN THOUSAND VAPORIZED BY THE BLAST, NOT THE HUNDRED THOUSAND REFUGEES WHO LEFT THEIR HOMES TO THE RADIATION.
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
WATER GOD

GERARD JONES WRITER • J.J. BIRCH PENCILER • BOBBY RAE INKER • JANICE CHIANG LETTERER • TOM SMITH COLORIST • JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR • TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

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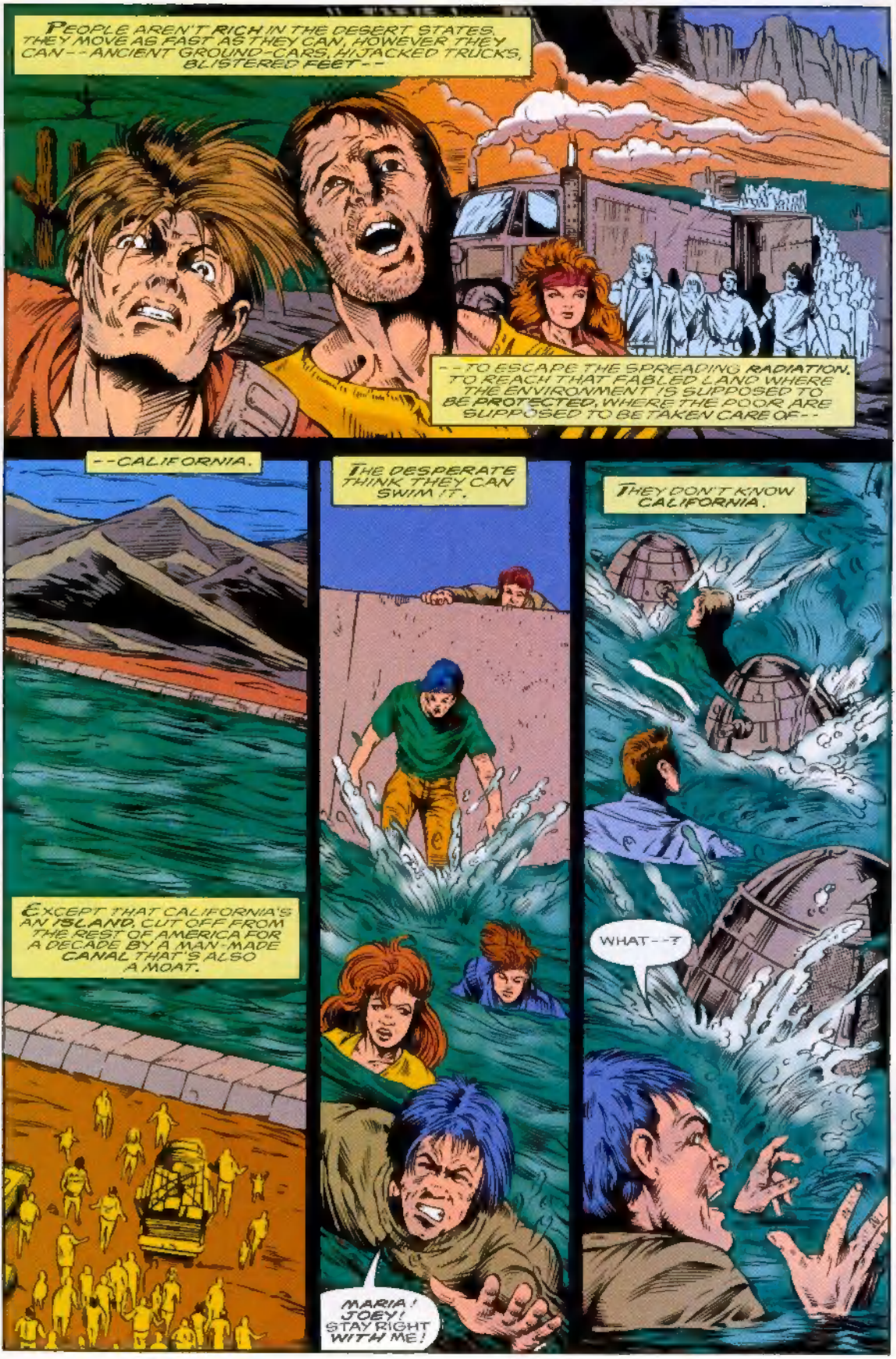
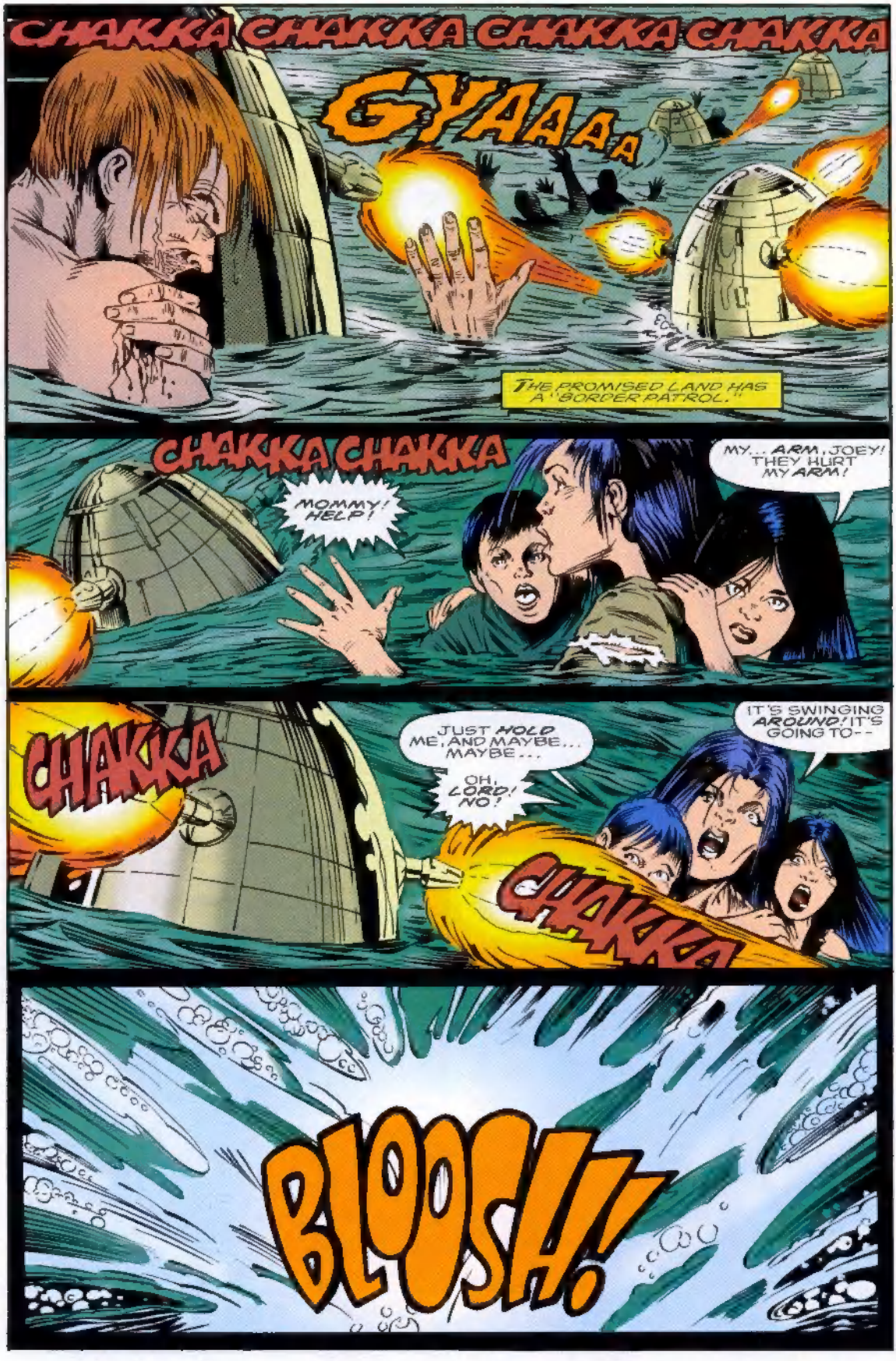
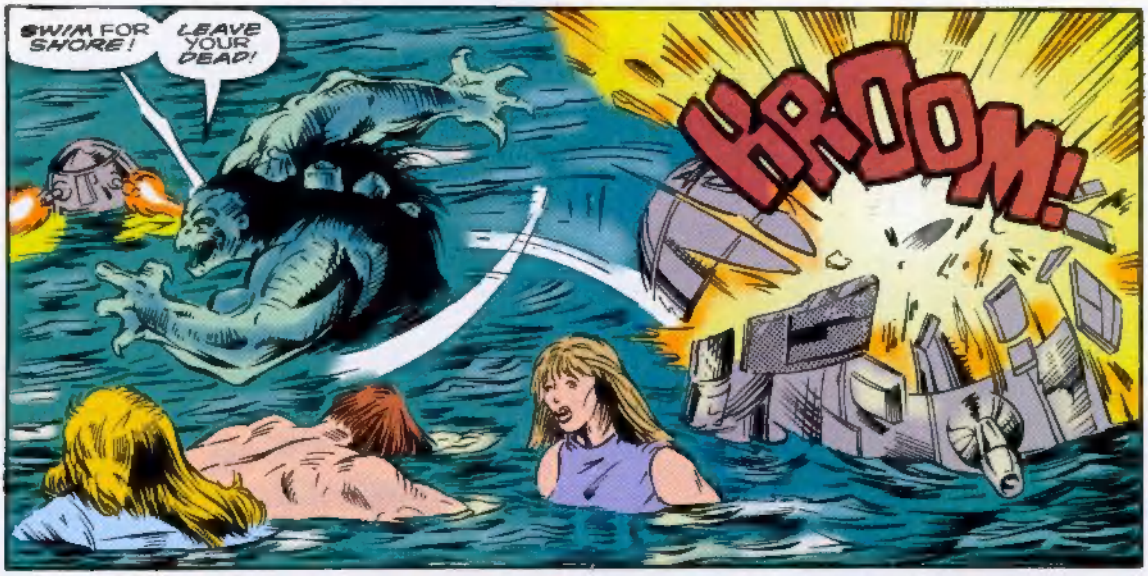

PEOPLE AREN'T RICH IN THE DESERT STATES. THEY MOVE AS FAST AS THEY CAN, HOWEVER THEY CAN--ANCIENT GROUND-CARS, HIJACKED TRUCKS, BLISTERED FEET--
--TO ESCAPE THE SPREADING RADIATION. TO REACH THAT FABLED LAND WHERE THE ENVIRONMENT IS SUPPOSED TO BE PROTECTED, WHERE THE POOR ARE SUPPOSED TO BE TAKEN CARE OF--
--CALIFORNIA.
EXCEPT THAT CALIFORNIA'S AN ISLAND, CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF AMERICA FOR A DECADE BY A MAN-MADE CANAL THAT'S ALSO A MOAT.
THE DESPERATE THINK THEY CAN SWIM IT.
MARIA! JOEY! STAY RIGHT WITH ME!
THEY DON'T KNOW CALIFORNIA.
WHAT--?


CHAKKA CHAKKA CHAKKA CHAKKA
GYAAAA
THE PROMISED LAND HAS A BORDER PATROL.
CHAKKA CHAKKA
MOMMY! HELP!
MY... ARM, JOEY! THEY HURT MY ARM!
CHAKKA
JUST HOLD ME, AND MAYBE... MAYBE...
OH, LORD! NO!
IT'S SWINGING AROUND! IT'S GOING TO--
CHAKKA
BLOOSH!

BUT BORDERS AREN'T THE ONLY THINGS THAT HAVE PROTECTORS IN THIS WORLD.
KU-ROMMCH!
MOMMY-- WHO IS THAT?!
I DON'T KNOW, HONEY. BUT I LOVE HIM!


SWIM FOR SHORE!
LEAVE YOUR DEAD!
KRDOM!

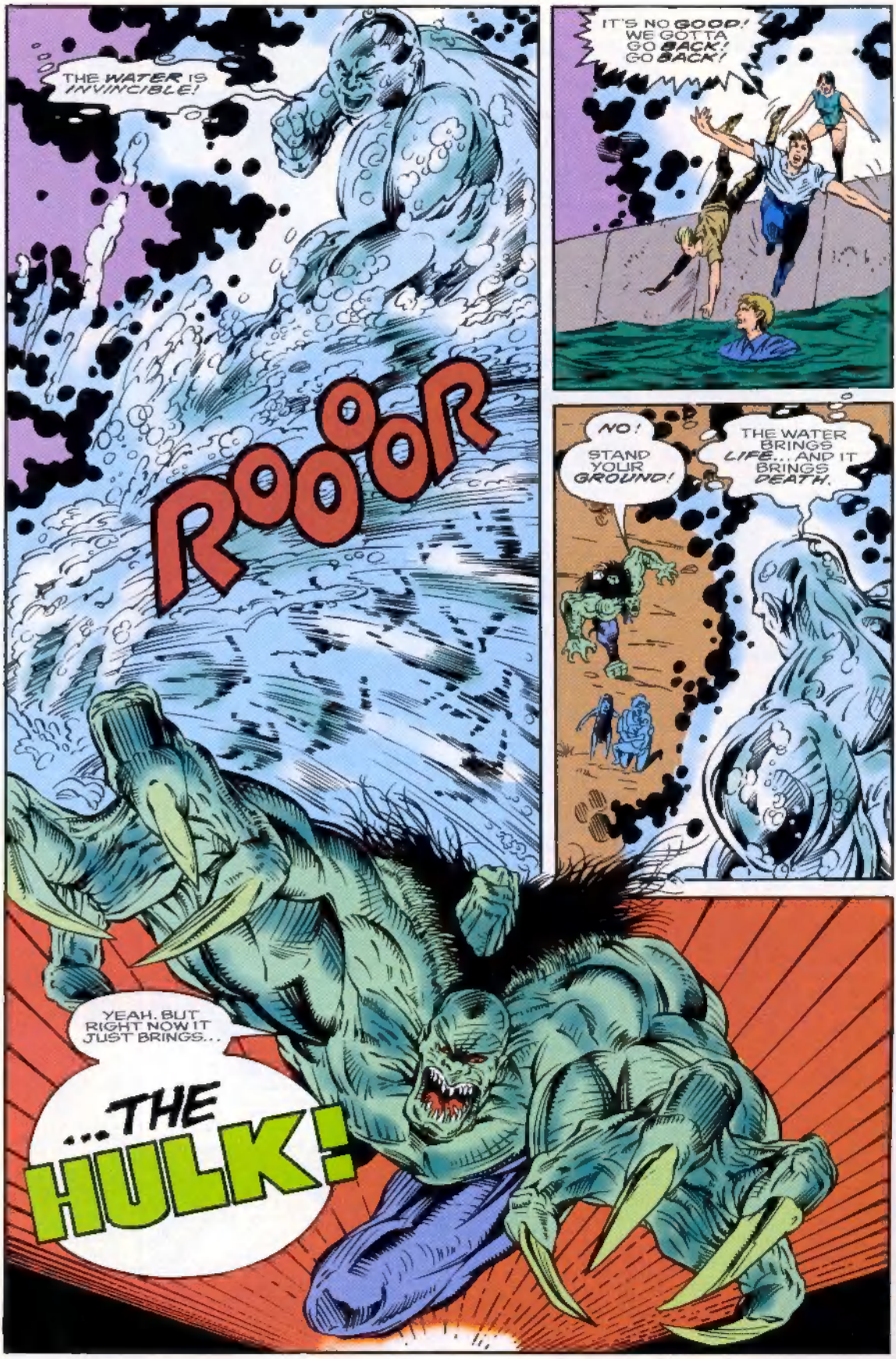
SKRUNCH!
DRAG ALL THE WOUNDED YOU CAN!

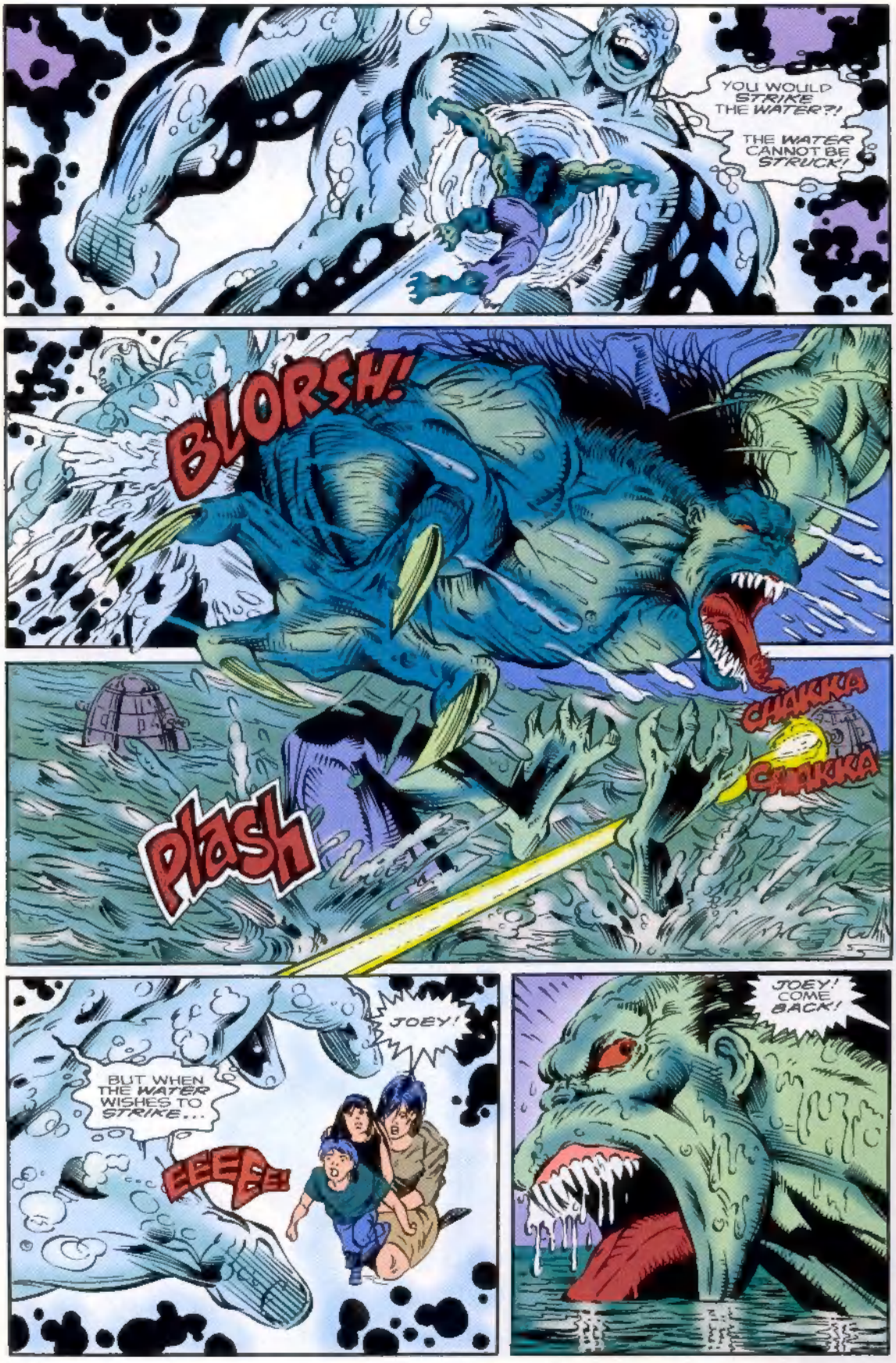
I'LL CARRY THE REST!
BLESS YOU! BLESS YOU!

SAVE YOUR BLESSINGS.
WHO BROUGHT CHILDREN INTO THIS?
THE EXPLOSION DESTROYED OUR HOME...

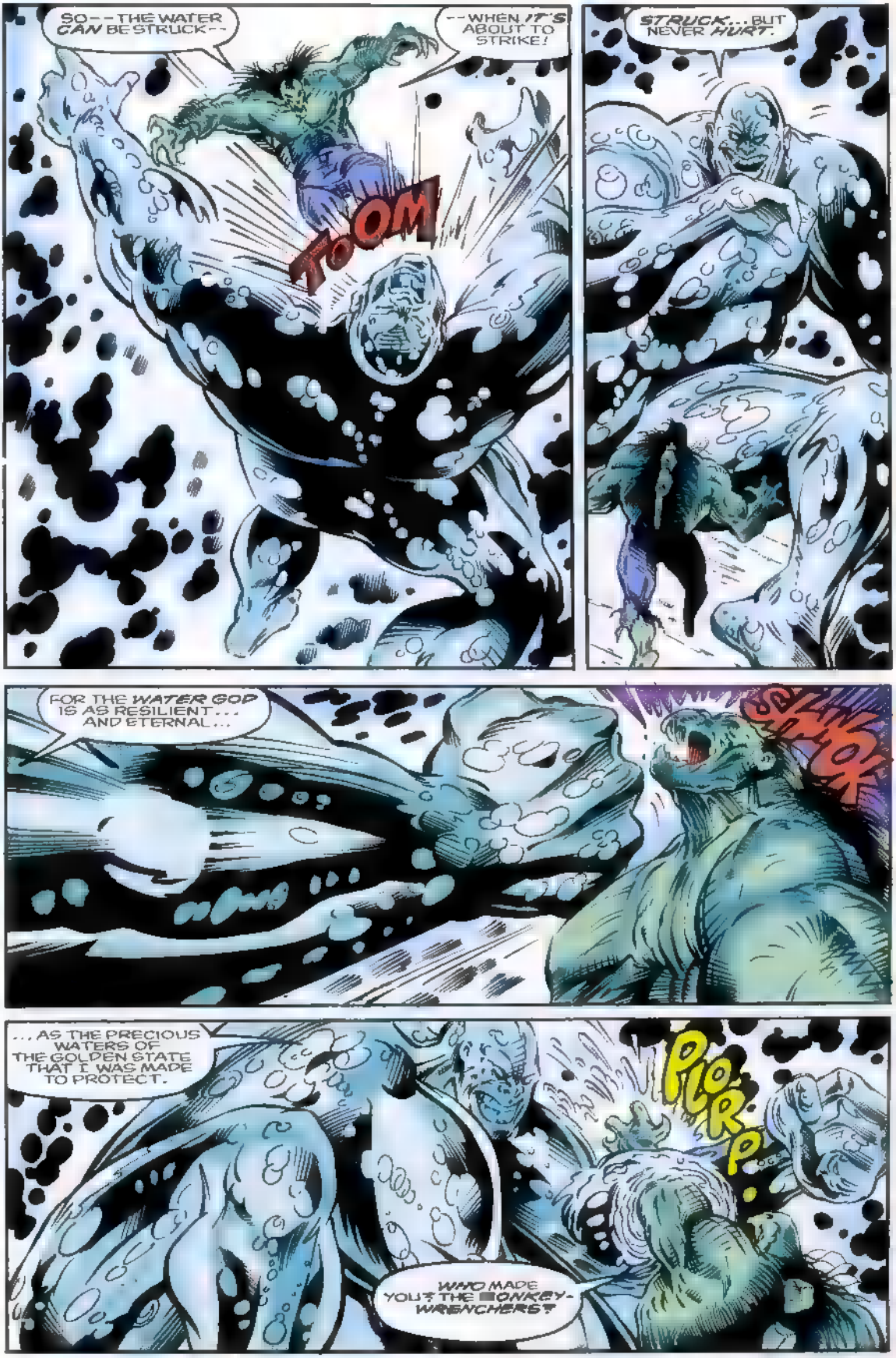
... THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY TO KEEP MY FAMILY TOGETHER, AND NOTHING MATTERS BUT MY FAMILY.
"FAMILY." HUH? I'M FROM HOLLYWOOD. NOBODY TALKS ABOUT FAMILY THERE...UNLESS THERE'S A PROFIT TO BE MADE FROM IT.
WHAT A COLD PLACE. WHY DO THEY WANT TO KILL A LOT OF POOR PEOPLE WHO JUST WANT TO SURVIVE?
WHY DO THEY WANT TO BE AN ISLAND?
THE CANAL WAS CREATED BY ECO-TERRORISTS, TRYING TO SAVE THE STATE'S PRECIOUS RESOURCES-- ESPECIALLY WATER.
NOW CALIFORNIA'S BOSSES USE IT TO CONTROL WHO COMES IN AND WHO GOES OUT-- TO MAKE SURE THEY'VE GOT ENOUGH CHEAP LABOR WITHOUT HAVING TO MESS WITH HORDES OF UNHAPPY POOR PEOPLE.
WHY DID YOU HELP US?
MAYBE I JUST FIGURED THIS CROOKED STATE COULD USE A LITTLE NEW BLOOD!
BWOOM!

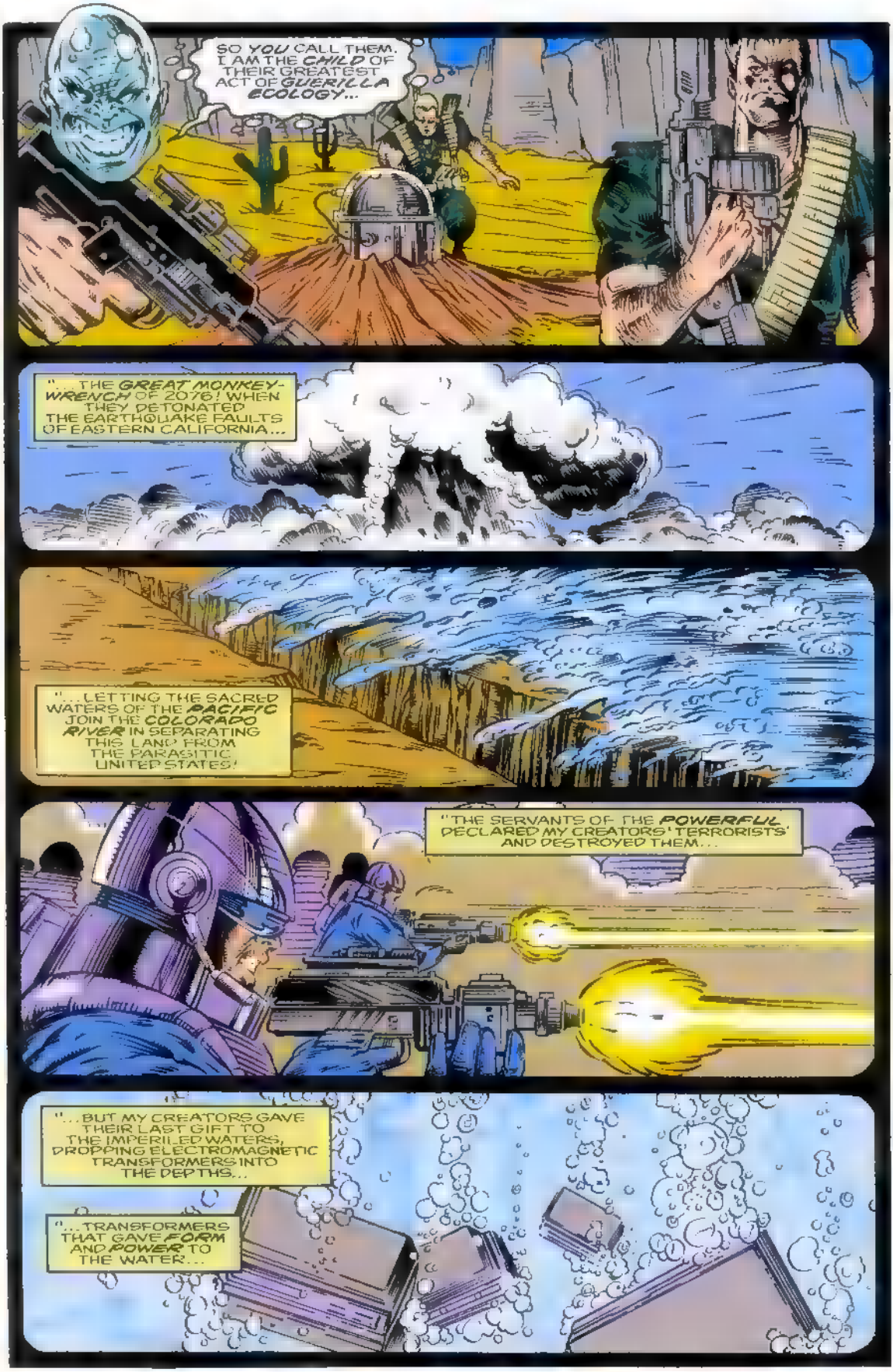
YOU HAVE DEFILED THE WATER!
YOU SEEK TO DRAIN THE HOMELAND DRY!
AND THAT... I MUST PREVENT!
THAT... IS WHY THE WATER GOD WAS MADE!

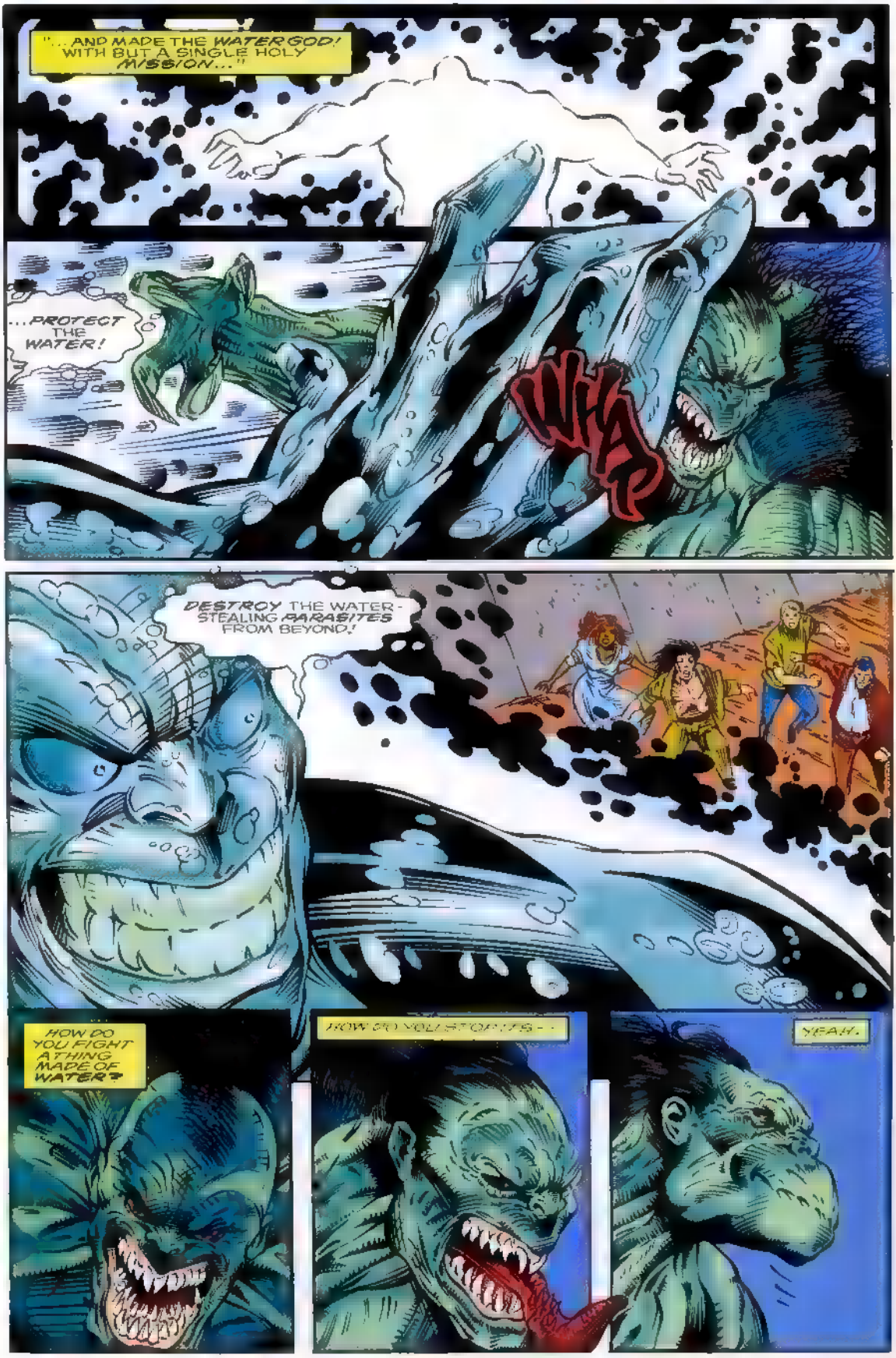

THE WATER IS INVINCIBLE!
ROOOR
IT'S NO GOOD! WE GOTTA GO BACK! GO BACK!
NO! STAND YOUR GROUND!
THE WATER BRINGS LIFE... AND IT BRINGS DEATH.
YEAH. BUT RIGHT NOW IT JUST BRINGS...
...THE HULK!


YOU WOULD STRIKE THE WATER?!
THE WATER CANNOT BE STRUCK!
BLORSH!
CHAKKKA
CHAKKKA
Plash
BUT WHEN THE WATER WISHES TO STRIKE...
EEEEE!
JOEY!
JOEY! COME BACK!

I'LL GET THE HULK! THE HULK'LL SAVE US! HE'LL--
SLAM
JOEY! GET UP, JOEY!
OH, PLEASE, JOEY, DON'T FOOL MOMMY. PLEASE GET UP, BABY...
YOU DEFILED... THE WATER, AND THE WATER GOD WAS MADE TO... PROTECT!


SO--THE WATER CAN BE STRUCK--
--WHEN IT'S ABOUT TO STRIKE!
TOOM
STRUCK... BUT NEVER HURT.
FOR THE WATER GOD IS AS RESILIENT... AND ETERNAL...
SLAK
...AS THE PRECIOUS WATERS OF THE GOLDEN STATE THAT I WAS MADE TO PROTECT.
PLORP
WHO MADE YOU? THE ■ONKEY-WRENCHERS?


SO YOU CALL THEM. I AM THE CHILD OF THEIR GREATEST ACT OF GUERILLA ECOLOGY...
"...THE GREAT MONKEY-WRENCH OF 2076! WHEN THEY DETONATED THE EARTHQUAKE FAULTS OF EASTERN CALIFORNIA...
"...LETTING THE SACRED WATERS OF THE PACIFIC JOIN THE COLORADO RIVER IN SEPARATING THIS LAND FROM THE PARASITIC UNITED STATES!
"THE SERVANTS OF THE POWERFUL DECLARED MY CREATORS 'TERRORISTS' AND DESTROYED THEM...
"...BUT MY CREATORS GAVE THEIR LAST GIFT TO THE IMPERILED WATERS, DROPPING ELECTROMAGNETIC TRANSFORMERS INTO THE DEPTHS...
"...TRANSFORMERS THAT GAVE FORM AND POWER TO THE WATER...

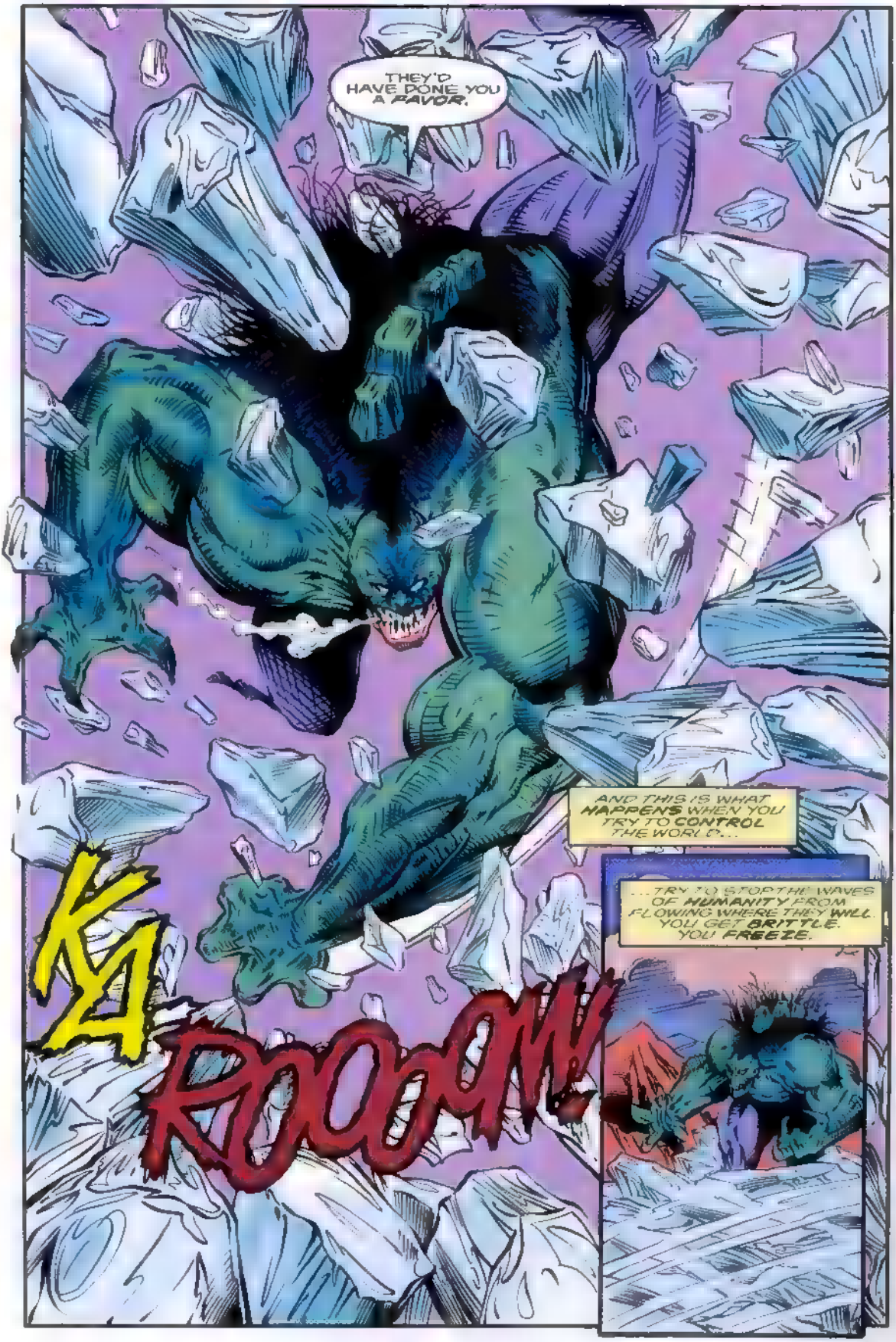

"...AND MADE THE WATER GOD! WITH BUT A SINGLE HOLY MISSION..."
...PROTECT THE WATER!
WHAP
DESTROY THE WATER-STEALING PARASITES FROM BEYOND!
HOW DO YOU FIGHT A THING MADE OF WATER?
HOW DO YOU STOP IT--
YEAH.

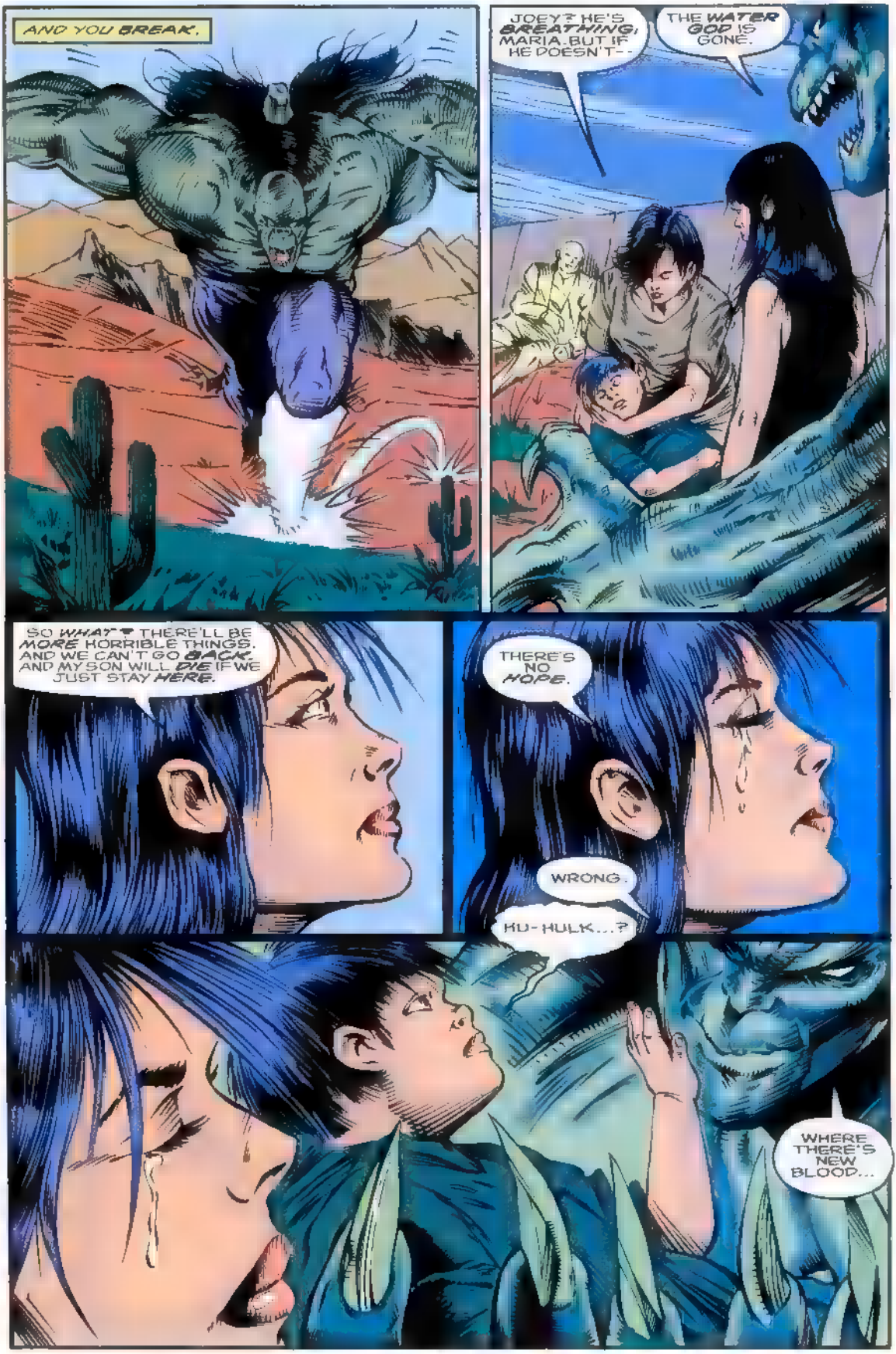
OH, YEAH!
THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT CALIFORNIA. DESERT, MOUNTAINS, WATER... ALL RIGHT NEAR EACH OTHER.
I DON'T NEED TO BEAT YOU, WATER GOD! I KNOW ANOTHER WAY TO GET THESE REFUGEES INTO YOUR GOLDEN STATE!
THOOM
I MAY LOOK SLOW AND WATER-BOUND, BUT MY CREATORS MADE ME WELL!
THERE IS NO WAY! NOT WHILE WATER GOD EXISTS!
WHEREVER YOU GO, I CAN FOLLOW!
HE'S RUNNING AWAY, MOMMY! HE'S RUNNING AWAY!
I GUESS... IT WAS TOO MUCH TO HOPE FOR...
...IN THIS DAY AND AGE.

HIGHER.
AIR GETS THINNER.
COLDER.
NEW FEELINGS FOR THIS BODY SLOWS ME DOWN.
BUT GOTTA CLIMB IT.
HIGHER!
HIGHER!
TOOM
TOOM!
ONE STEP AHEAD OF IT.

YOU HAVE NOWHERE TO RUN NOW! NOTHING MADE OF LAND CAN WITHSTAND THE ETERNAL ONRUSH OF THE WATER!
YOU ARE FINISHED-- YOU AND ALL THE PARASITES YOU DEFEND!
WANNA BET?

YOU WILL SEE...
WHAT?
WHY...AM...I...SLOW...ING...
NO.
THE C--
THE COLD!
YOUR CREATORS NEVER THOUGHT THEY'D HAVE TO TEACH YOU ABOUT THE COLD!


THEY'D HAVE DONE YOU A FAVOR.
AND THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY TO CONTROL THE WORLD...
...TRY TO STOP THE WAVES OF HUMANITY FROM FLOWING WHERE THEY WILL. YOU GET BRITTLE. YOU FREEZE.
KA-
ROOOOM!

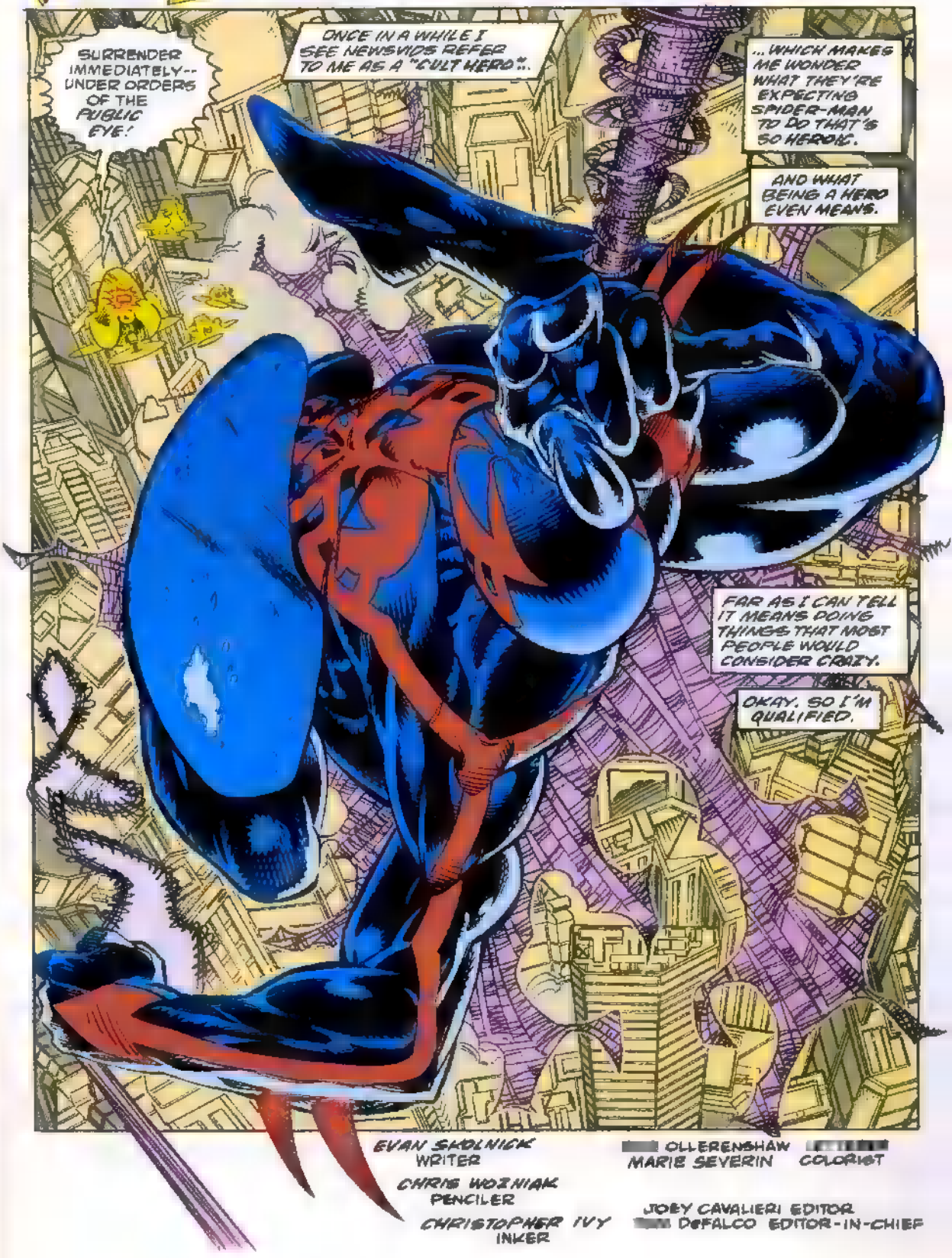

AND YOU BREAK.
JOEY? HE'S BREATHING, MARIA. BUT IF HE DOESN'T--
THE WATER GOD IS GONE.
SO WHAT? THERE'LL BE MORE HORRIBLE THINGS. AND WE CAN'T GO BACK. AND MY SON WILL DIE IF WE JUST STAY HERE.
THERE'S NO HOPE.
WRONG.
HU-HULK...?
WHERE THERE'S NEW BLOOD...

"... THERE'S ALWAYS NEW HOPE."
END

STAN LEE PRESENTS...

SPIDER-MAN 2099

SPARE CHANGES


SURRENDER IMMEDIATELY-- UNDER ORDERS OF THE PUBLIC EYE!
ONCE IN A WHILE I SEE NEWSVIDS REFER TO ME AS A "CULT HERO"...
...WHICH MAKES ME WONDER WHAT THEY'RE EXPECTING SPIDER-MAN TO DO THAT'S SO HEROIC.
AND WHAT BEING A HERO EVEN MEANS.
FAR AS I CAN TELL IT MEANS DOING THINGS THAT MOST PEOPLE WOULD CONSIDER CRAZY.
OKAY. SO I'M QUALIFIED.

EVAN SKOLNICK
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CHRISTOPHER IVY
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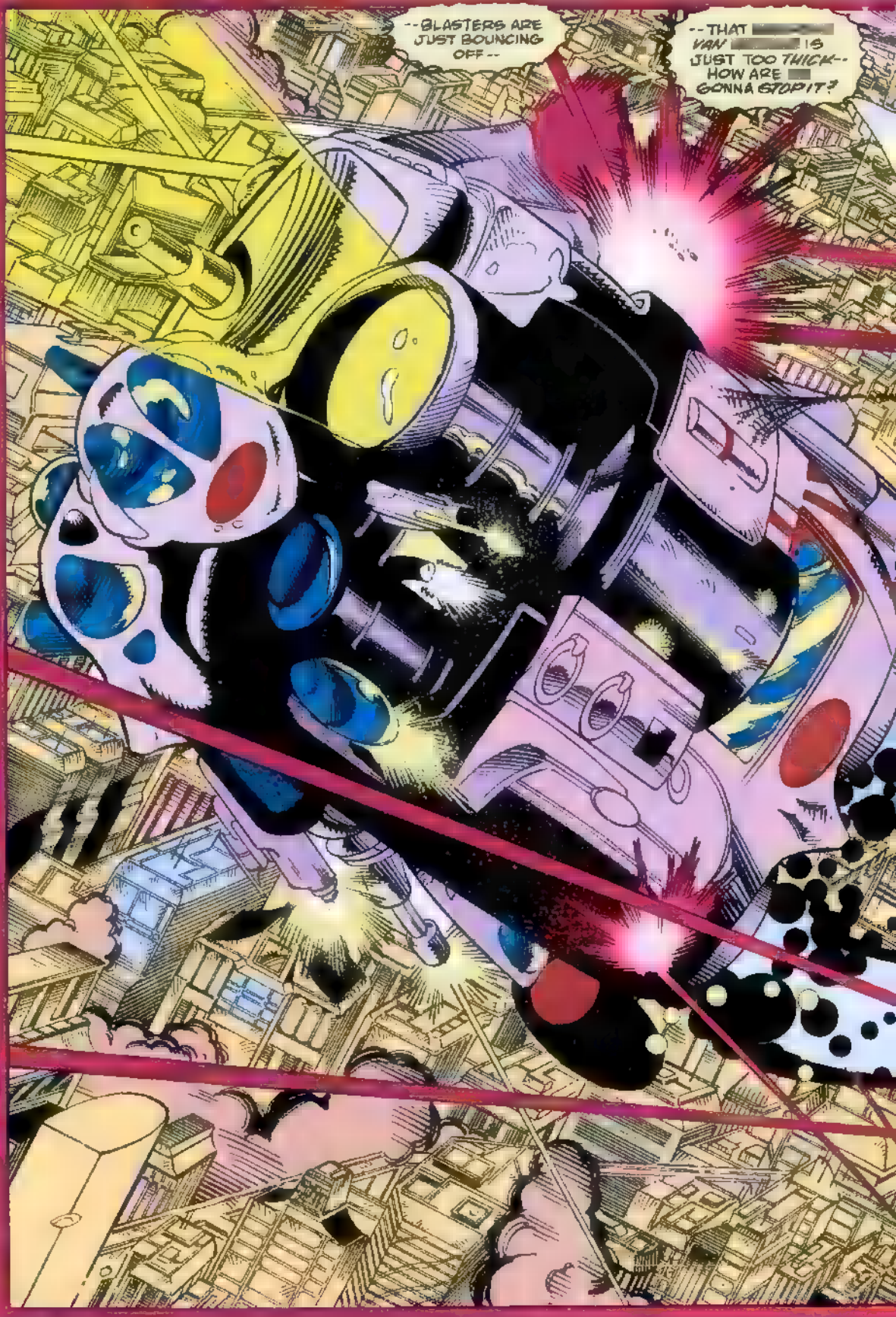
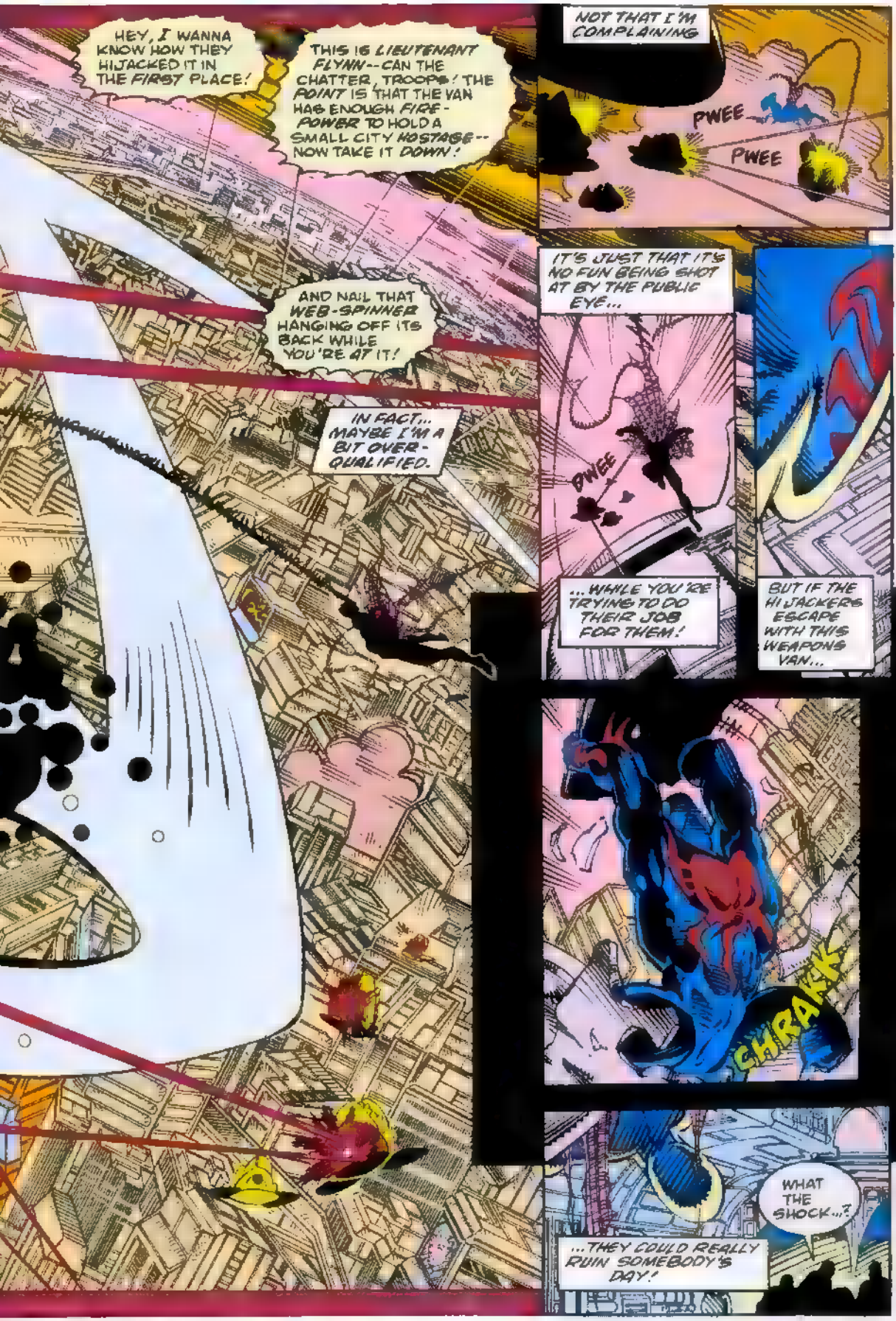
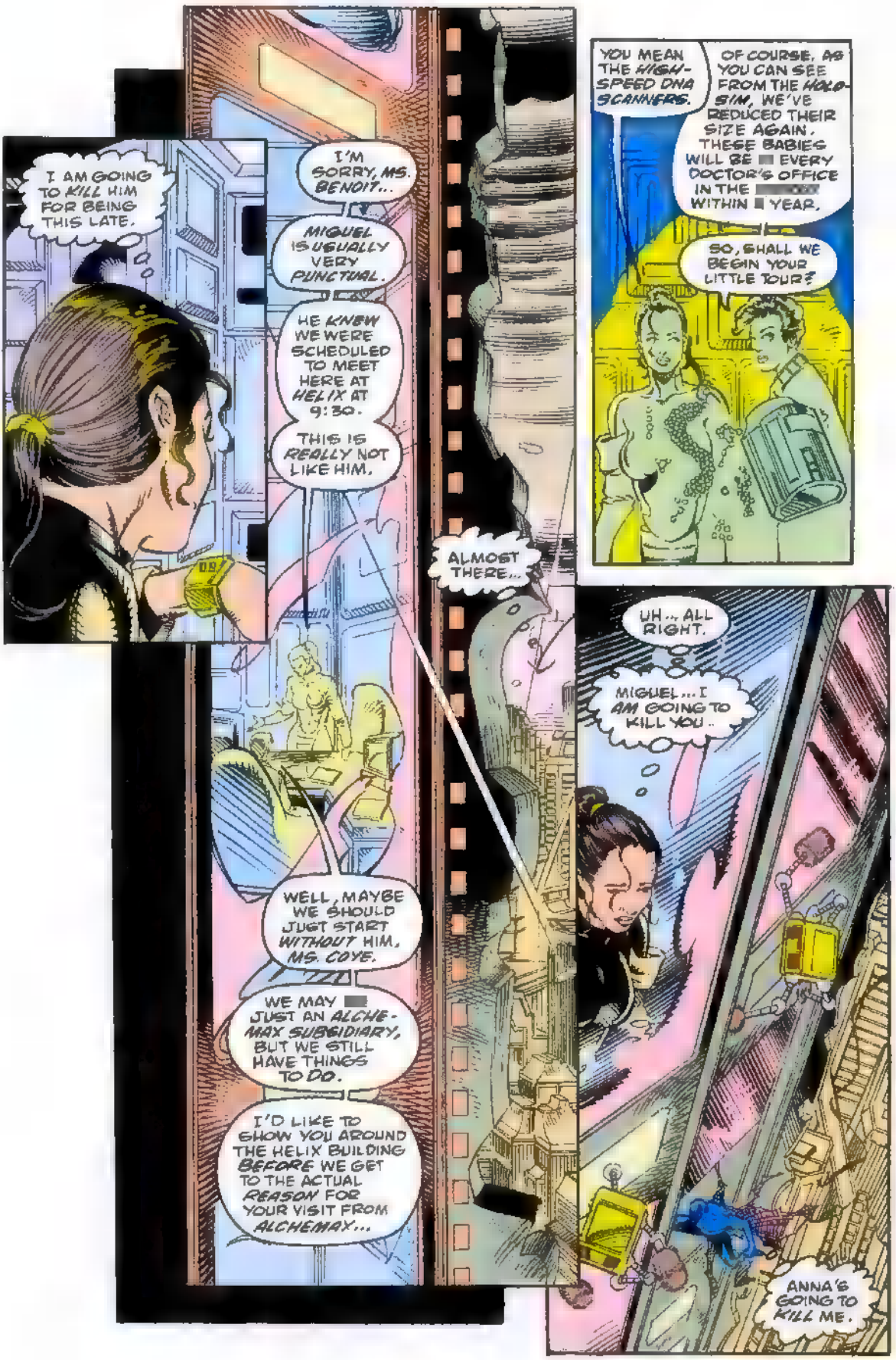
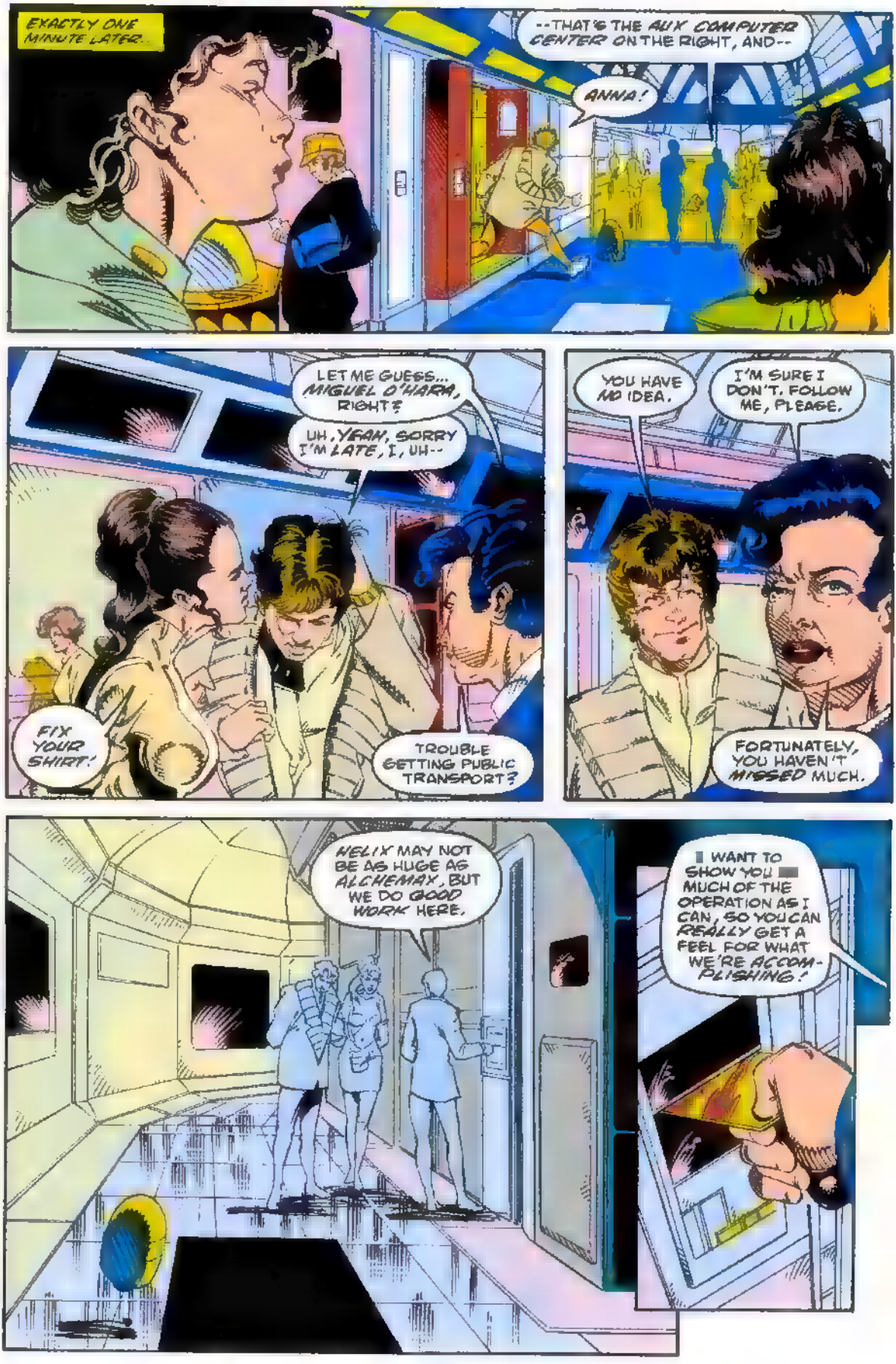

--BLASTERS ARE JUST BOUNCING OFF--
--THAT [redacted] VAN [redacted] IS JUST TOO THICK-- HOW ARE [redacted] GONNA STOP IT?


HEY, I WANNA KNOW HOW THEY HIJACKED IT IN THE FIRST PLACE!
THIS IS LIEUTENANT FLYNN--CAN THE CHATTER, TROOPS! THE POINT IS THAT THE VAN HAS ENOUGH FIRE-POWER TO HOLD A SMALL CITY HOSTAGE--NOW TAKE IT DOWN!
AND NAIL THAT WEB-SPINNER HANGING OFF ITS BACK WHILE YOU'RE AT IT!
IN FACT... MAYBE I'M A BIT OVER-QUALIFIED.
NOT THAT I'M COMPLAINING
PWEE
PWEE
IT'S JUST THAT IT'S NO FUN BEING SHOT AT BY THE PUBLIC EYE...
PWEE
...WHILE YOU'RE TRYING TO DO THEIR JOB FOR THEM!
BUT IF THE HIJACKERS ESCAPE WITH THIS WEAPONS VAN...
SHRAK
WHAT THE SHOCK...?
...THEY COULD REALLY RUIN SOMEBODY'S DAY!

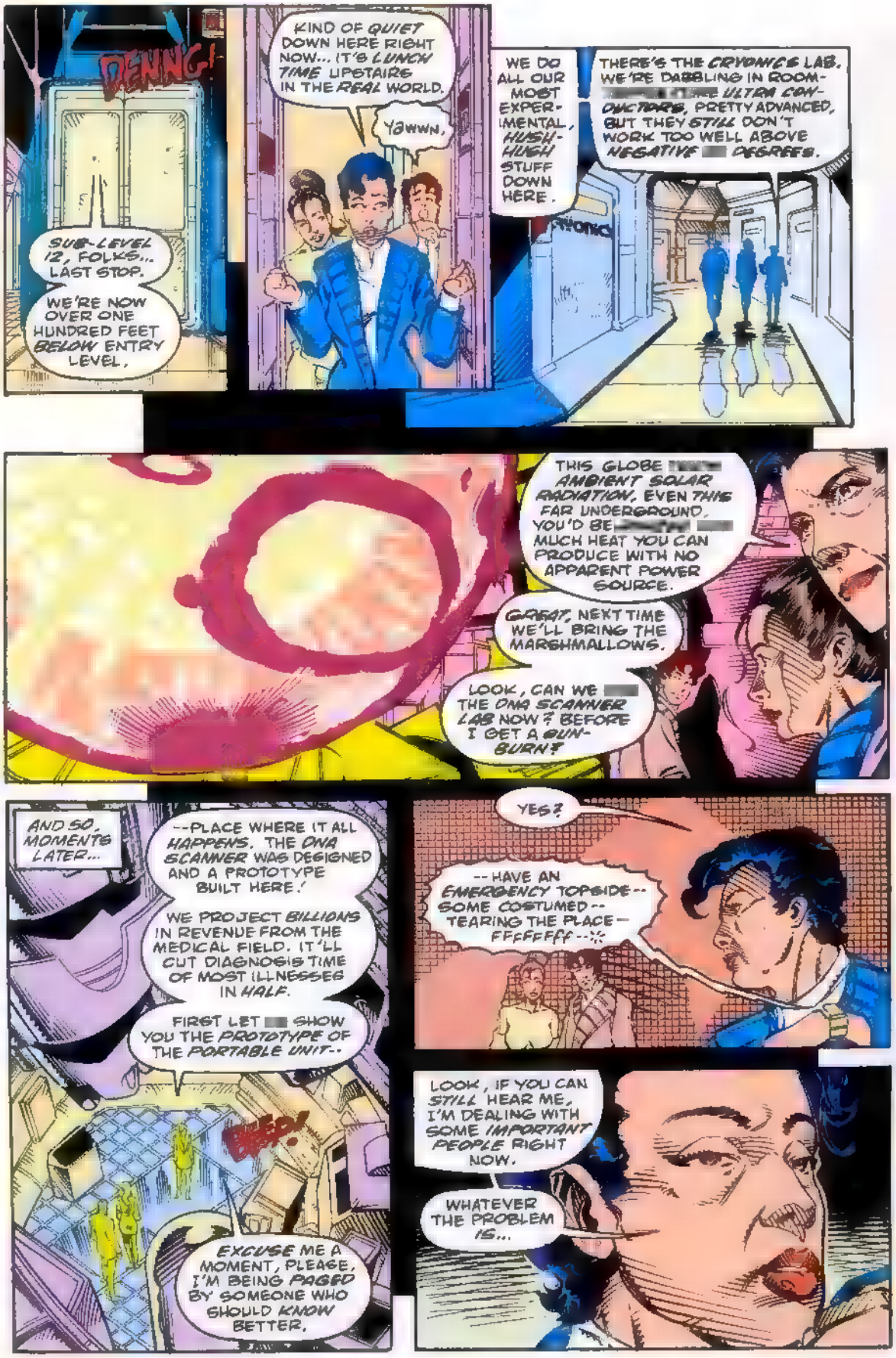
AAGH!
DWEE
FWAK
DWEE
PLEASE! MY VIRGIN EARS!
KLUDD
GET TO AUTO-HOVER AND THE SHOW'S OVER.
DWE
DWEE
NOT QUITE-- THOSE R.E. FEEBS STILL FIRING AT THIS BEAST!
HM, WHERE'S THE COMMUNI-- CATOR...?
--TOLD YOU PUGS TO STAY IN FORMATION--
WAIT...ALL RIGHT, CEASE FIRE. REPEAT, CEASE FIRE!
WHAT? BUT, LIEUTENANT--
THAT'S AN ORDER!
LOOK! SPIDER-MAN'S BAILING! NAIL HIM!
NO. LET HIM GO.
Lieutenant, I have no intention of attacking you... unless you keep firing on me, Spider-
10:04 AM
YUP. I'M REALLY, REALLY LATE.

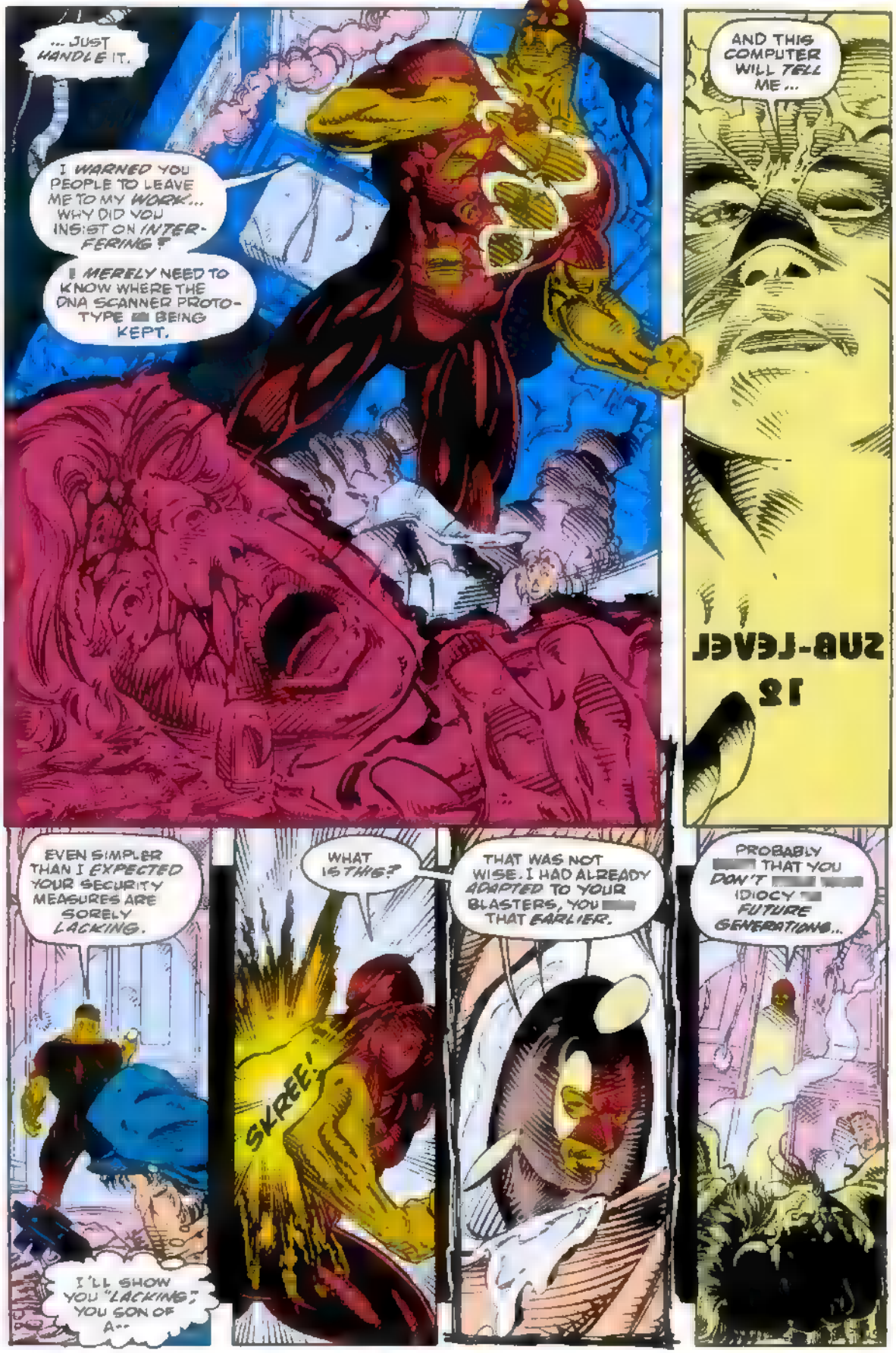

I AM GOING TO KILL HIM FOR BEING THIS LATE.
I'M SORRY, MS. BENOIT...
MIGUEL IS USUALLY VERY PUNCTUAL.
HE KNEW WE WERE SCHEDULED TO MEET HERE AT HELIX AT 9:30.
THIS IS REALLY NOT LIKE HIM.
WELL, MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST START WITHOUT HIM, MS. COYE.
WE MAY [redacted] JUST AN ALCHEMAX SUBSIDIARY, BUT WE STILL HAVE THINGS TO DO.
I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU AROUND THE HELIX BUILDING BEFORE WE GET TO THE ACTUAL REASON FOR YOUR VISIT FROM ALCHEMAX...
YOU MEAN THE HIGH-SPEED DNA SCANNERS.
OF COURSE, AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE HOLO-SIM, WE'VE REDUCED THEIR SIZE AGAIN. THESE BABIES WILL BE [redacted] EVERY DOCTOR'S OFFICE IN THE [redacted] WITHIN [redacted] YEAR.
SO, SHALL WE BEGIN YOUR LITTLE TOUR?
ALMOST THERE...
UH... ALL RIGHT.
MIGUEL... I AM GOING TO KILL YOU..
ANNA'S GOING TO KILL ME.


EXACTLY ONE MINUTE LATER...
--THAT'S THE AUX COMPUTER CENTER ON THE RIGHT, AND--
ANNA!
LET ME GUESS... MIGUEL O'HARA, RIGHT?
UH, YEAH, SORRY I'M LATE, I, UH--
FIX YOUR SHIRT!
TROUBLE GETTING PUBLIC TRANSPORT?
YOU HAVE NO IDEA.
I'M SURE I DON'T. FOLLOW ME, PLEASE.
FORTUNATELY, YOU HAVEN'T MISSED MUCH.
HELIX MAY NOT BE AS HUGE AS ALCHEMAX, BUT WE DO GOOD WORK HERE.
I WANT TO SHOW YOU [redacted] MUCH OF THE OPERATION AS I CAN, SO YOU CAN REALLY GET A FEEL FOR WHAT WE'RE ACCOMPLISHING!

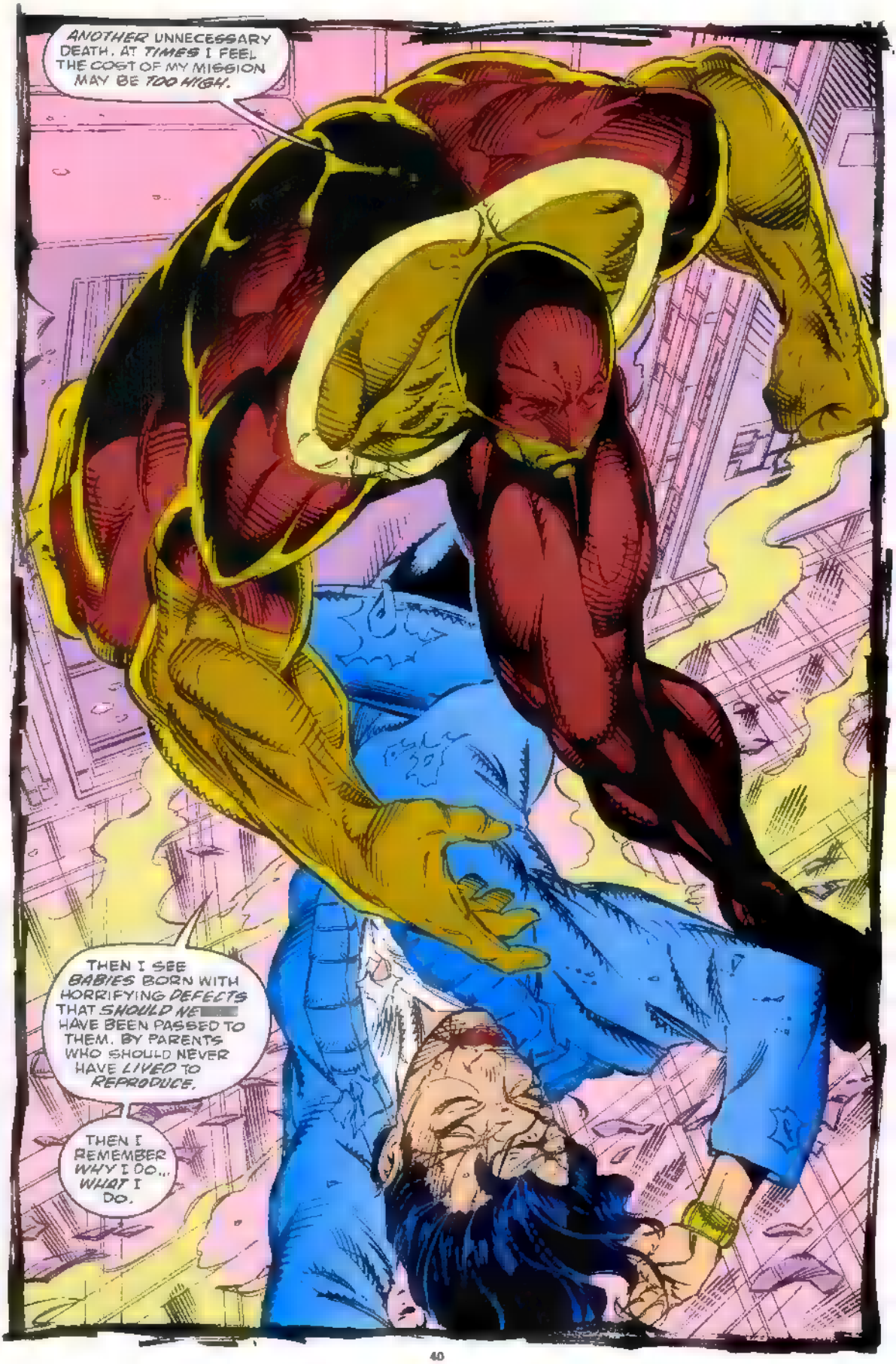
DOWNTOWN, A FEW HOURS LATER...
12:28
FINALLY!
TOOK ME HOURS TO HACK INTO THIS NET, NOW WE'LL SEE WHAT THERE IS TO SEE AT HELIX.
IF THIS NEW HIGH-SPEED-DNA SCANNER WORKS THE WAY THEY HOPE IT DOES I COULD FIND IT INVALUABLE FOR MY MISSION.
NO MORE HOSPITAL COMPUTER FILES TO STEAL, NO MORE GUESS-WORK.
I COULD USE THE SCANNER RIGHT ON THE STREET--MAKE MY DECISIONS ON THE SPOT.
HELIX BUILDING 2660 KING BLVD.
THOSE WITH PURE, HEALTHY DNA WILL [redacted] ALLOWED TO LIVE AND REPRODUCE.
THOSE WITH INHERITABLE GENETIC DEFECTS MUST DIE...
...SO THAT THE HUMAN GENE POOL MAY IMPROVE ITSELF.
I WILL BE THE CATALYST FOR THIS JUMP-STARTING OF EVOLUTION...

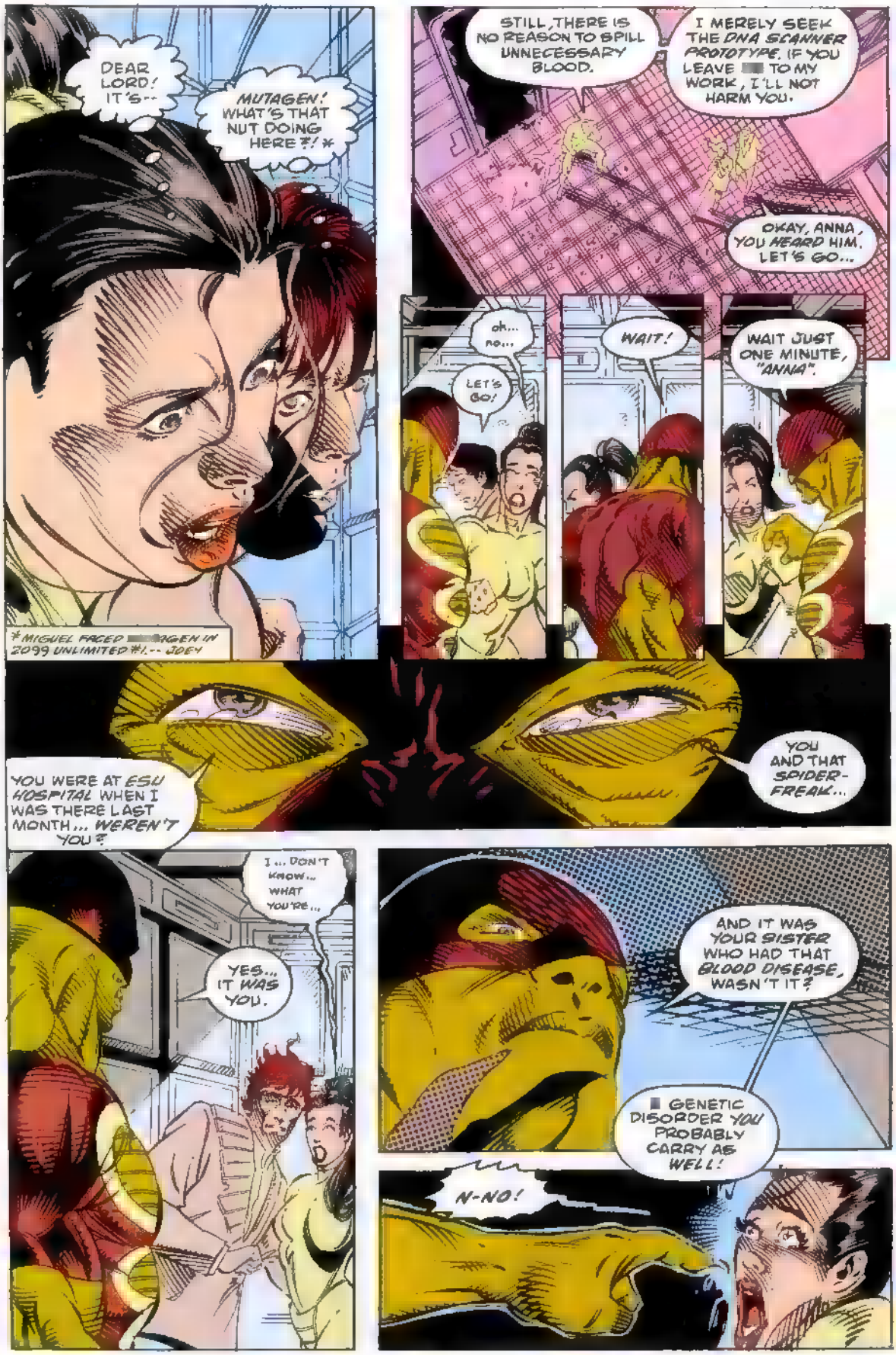
... AND NOTHING WILL STOP ME!
OTHERWISE, THE HUMAN RACE WILL STAGNATE... CEASE TO ADAPT.
[redacted] NO ONE KNOWS [redacted] ABOUT ADAPTATION...
THAN I--
--MUTAGEN!


DENNG!
SUB-LEVEL 12, FOLKS... LAST STOP.
WE'RE NOW OVER ONE HUNDRED FEET BELOW ENTRY LEVEL.
KIND OF QUIET DOWN HERE RIGHT NOW... IT'S LUNCH TIME UPSTAIRS IN THE REAL WORLD.
YAWWN.
WE DO ALL OUR MOST EXPERIMENTAL, HUSH-HUSH STUFF DOWN HERE.
THERE'S THE CRYOGENICS LAB. WE'RE DABBLING IN ROOM- ULTRA CONDUCTORS, PRETTY ADVANCED, BUT THEY STILL DON'T WORK TOO WELL ABOVE NEGATIVE DEGREES.
THIS GLOBE AMBIENT SOLAR RADIATION, EVEN THIS FAR UNDERGROUND, YOU'D BE MUCH HEAT YOU CAN PRODUCE WITH NO APPARENT POWER SOURCE.
GREAT, NEXT TIME WE'LL BRING THE MARSHMALLOWS.
LOOK, CAN WE THE DNA SCANNER LAB NOW? BEFORE I GET A GUN-BURN?
AND SO, MOMENTS LATER...
--PLACE WHERE IT ALL HAPPENS. THE DNA SCANNER WAS DESIGNED AND A PROTOTYPE BUILT HERE.
WE PROJECT BILLIONS IN REVENUE FROM THE MEDICAL FIELD. IT'LL CUT DIAGNOSIS TIME OF MOST ILLNESSES IN HALF.
FIRST LET SHOW YOU THE PROTOTYPE OF THE PORTABLE UNIT--
BEEP!
EXCUSE ME A MOMENT, PLEASE, I'M BEING PAGED BY SOMEONE WHO SHOULD KNOW BETTER.
YES?
--HAVE AN EMERGENCY TOPSIDE-- SOME COSTUMED-- TEARING THE PLACE— FFFFFFFF--
LOOK, IF YOU CAN STILL HEAR ME, I'M DEALING WITH SOME IMPORTANT PEOPLE RIGHT NOW.
WHATEVER THE PROBLEM IS...

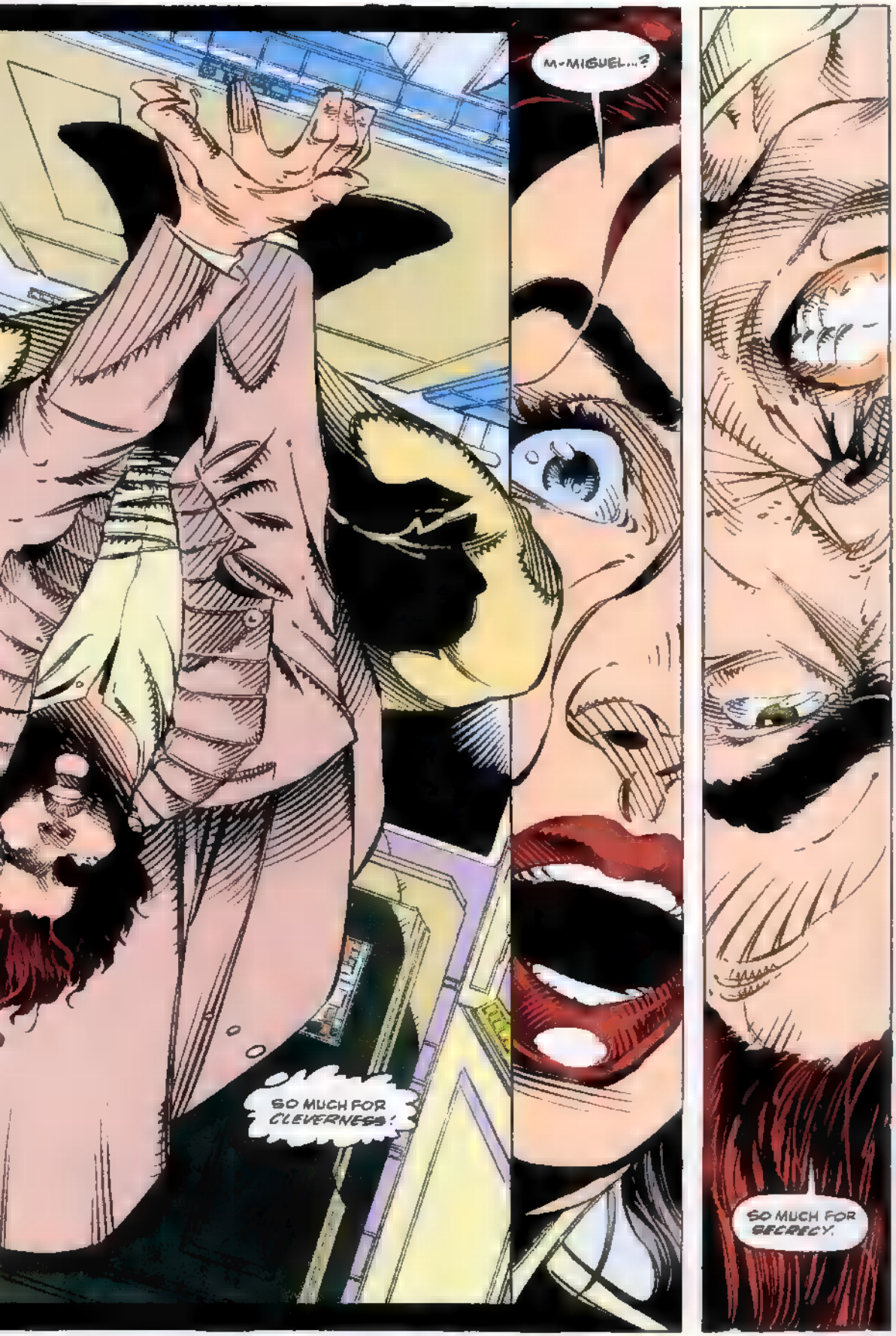

... JUST HANDLE IT.
I WARNED YOU PEOPLE TO LEAVE ME TO MY WORK... WHY DID YOU INSIST ON INTERFERING?
I MERELY NEED TO KNOW WHERE THE DNA SCANNER PROTOTYPE [redacted] BEING KEPT.
AND THIS COMPUTER WILL TELL ME...
SUB-LEVEL 12
EVEN SIMPLER THAN I EXPECTED YOUR SECURITY MEASURES ARE SORELY LACKING.
I'LL SHOW YOU "LACKING," YOU SON OF A--
WHAT IS THIS?
SKREE!
THAT WAS NOT WISE. I HAD ALREADY ADAPTED TO YOUR BLASTERS, YOU [redacted] THAT EARLIER.
PROBABLY [redacted] THAT YOU DON'T [redacted] IDIOCY [redacted] FUTURE GENERATIONS..

VERY IMPRESSIVE, MS. BENOIT, I CAN'T GET OVER HOW FAST THIS SCANNER MAKES A DIAGNOSIS--
ESPECIALLY IN SUCH A COMPACT UNIT!
I'M GLAD YOU'RE IMPRESSED, I'M SURE ALCHEMAX WILL FIND THIS DEVICE HIGHLY USEFUL... AND MARKETABLE--
SHKREEWHHHH
WHAT THE SHOCK WAS THAT?
SOUNDED LIKE METAL...
YEAH... METAL UNDER STRESS...
"... MAYBE IT NEEDS TO TAKE A VACATION."
AARHHMMK
I'M SORRY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PLACE TODAY.
EXCUSE ME WHILE I TRY TO FIND OUT.
GREAT. NOW THE LAB DOOR WON'T OPEN.
I'LL TRY THE MANUAL OVERRIDE AND--
NAANGHH
WHAT IN THE--
WHUDOOMM!


ANOTHER UNNECESSARY DEATH. AT TIMES I FEEL THE COST OF MY MISSION MAY BE TOO HIGH.
THEN I SEE BABIES BORN WITH HORRIFYING DEFECTS THAT SHOULD NE[redacted] HAVE BEEN PASSED TO THEM. BY PARENTS WHO SHOULD NEVER HAVE LIVED TO REPRODUCE.
THEN I REMEMBER WHY I DO... WHAT I DO.


DEAR LORD! IT'S--
MUTAGEN! WHAT'S THAT NUT DOING HERE?! *
* MIGUEL FACED [redacted]AGEN IN 2099 UNLIMITED #1.-- JOEY
STILL, THERE IS NO REASON TO SPILL UNNECESSARY BLOOD.
I MERELY SEEK THE DNA SCANNER PROTOTYPE. IF YOU LEAVE [redacted] TO MY WORK, I'LL NOT HARM YOU.
OKAY, ANNA, YOU HEARD HIM. LET'S GO...
oh... no...
LET'S GO!
WAIT!
WAIT JUST ONE MINUTE, "ANNA".
YOU WERE AT ESU HOSPITAL WHEN I WAS THERE LAST MONTH... WEREN'T YOU?
YOU AND THAT SPIDER-FREAK...
I... DON'T KNOW... WHAT YOU'RE...
YES... IT WAS YOU.
AND IT WAS YOUR SISTER WHO HAD THAT BLOOD DISEASE, WASN'T IT?
[redacted] GENETIC DISORDER YOU PROBABLY CARRY AS WELL!
N-NO!

GREAT... HOW DO I GET ANNA OUT OF THIS WITHOUT GIVING MY OTHER IDENTITY AWAY? MAYBE SOMETHING CLEVER LIKE--
NOW LOOK, YOU, WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
I AM MUTAGEN. DO NOT INTERFERE.
MIGUEL!
BRAKK
WHUMCH
WHUNCH
GOOD LORD--!


M-MIGUEL...?
SO MUCH FOR CLEVERNESS!
SO MUCH FOR SECRECY.

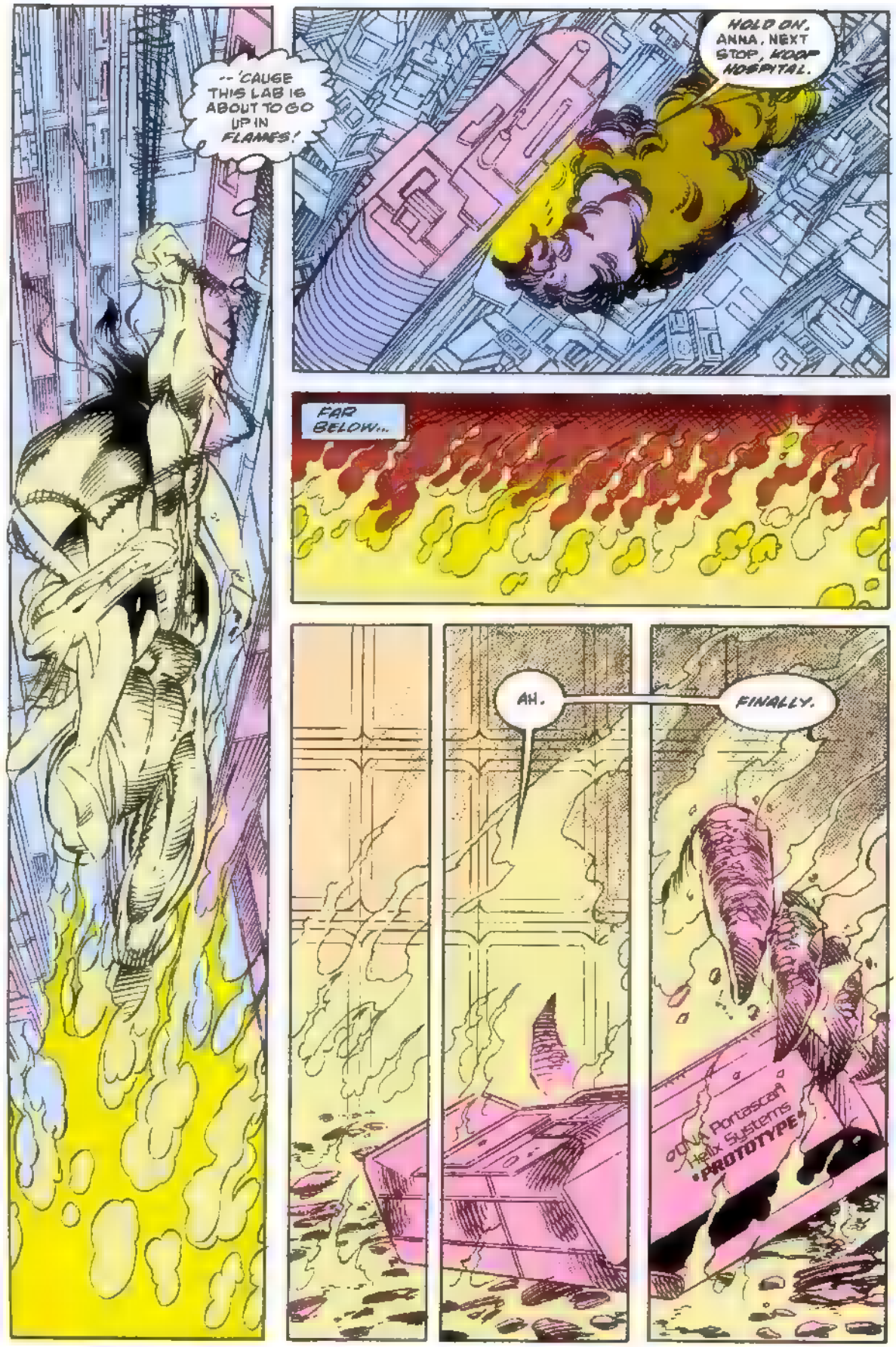
GOT TO HIT HIM FAST AND HARD, BEFORE HE CAN ADAPT--
ZZHRIP!
AARRH!
--AND GET MY MASK ON BEFORE ANYONE ELSE SEES WHO I AM!
KRAKK
WHACK
RUN, ANNA, RUN!
ENOUGH! HOW DARE YOU--
LIKE THIS.
FWIBTH!
DID YOU REALLY THINK THAT WOULD HELP YOU?
NO, BUT IT GAVE ME TIME TO GET INTO MY PAJAMAS. SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?
SPIDER-MAN AGAIN! I THINK... ...YOU'RE ANNOYING ME!
AH, AH, AH, GIRL...
UNH!

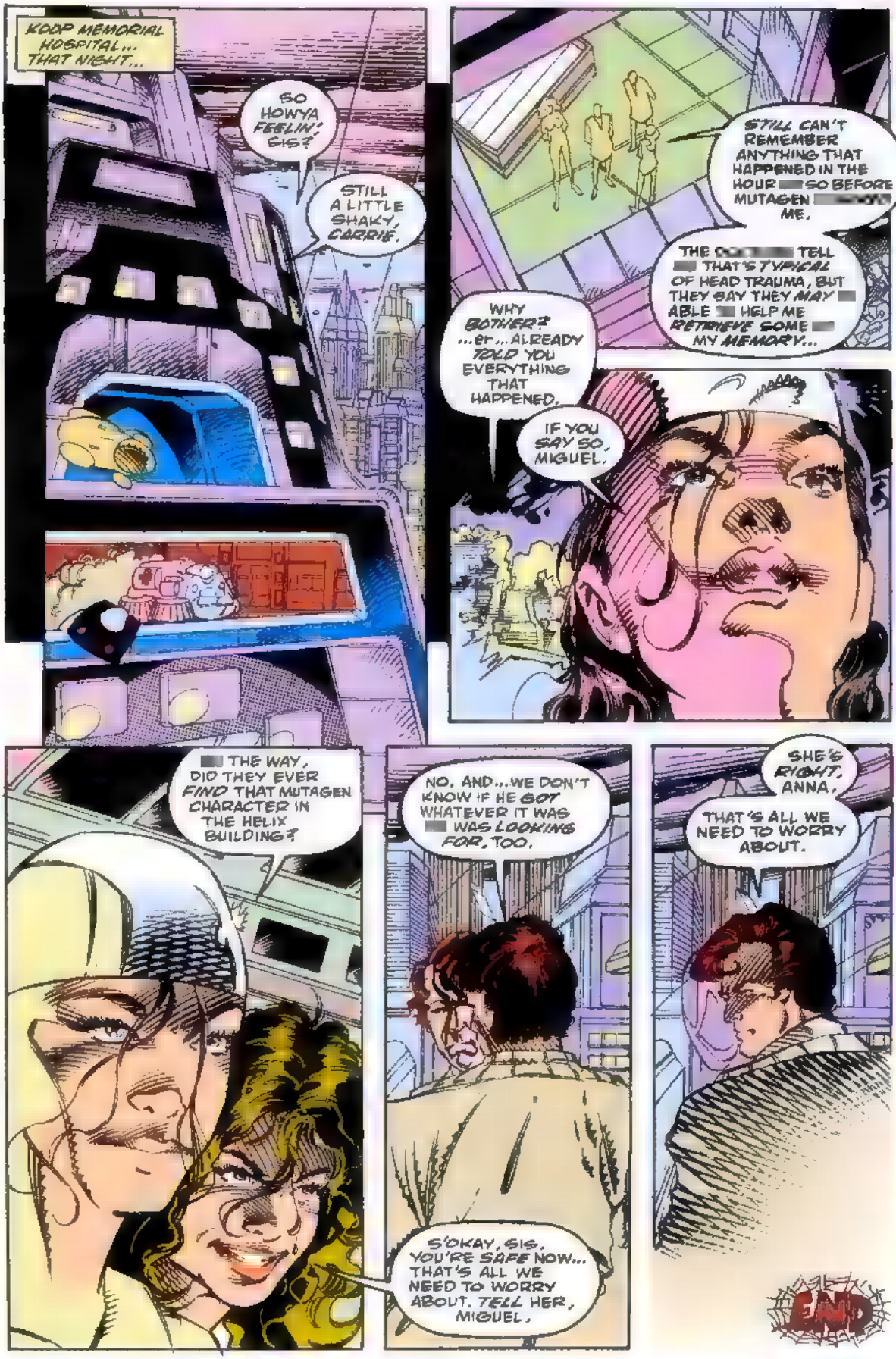
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!
SKRAK
OHH!
NOW STAND BACK, SPIDER-MAN, OR--
SHUT UP, YOU MANIAC! IF YOU'VE HURT ANNA, I'LL MAKE YOU PAY!
DO YOU HEAR ME?
YOU'LL PAY-- IN BLOOD!
WHUKROOM
THAT WASN'T TOO BRIGHT-- IT'S FREEZING IN HERE!
NOW YOU'RE GETTING INTO THE SPIRIT OF IT, SPIDER-MAN!
ONLY I'M NOT ONE OF THE ONES WHO SHOULD DIE!
NOT GOOD-- HE'S ALREADY ADAPTING TO THE COLD, WHILE I'M ABOUT TO BECOME AMERICA'S FAVORITE SUMMERTIME DESSERT!

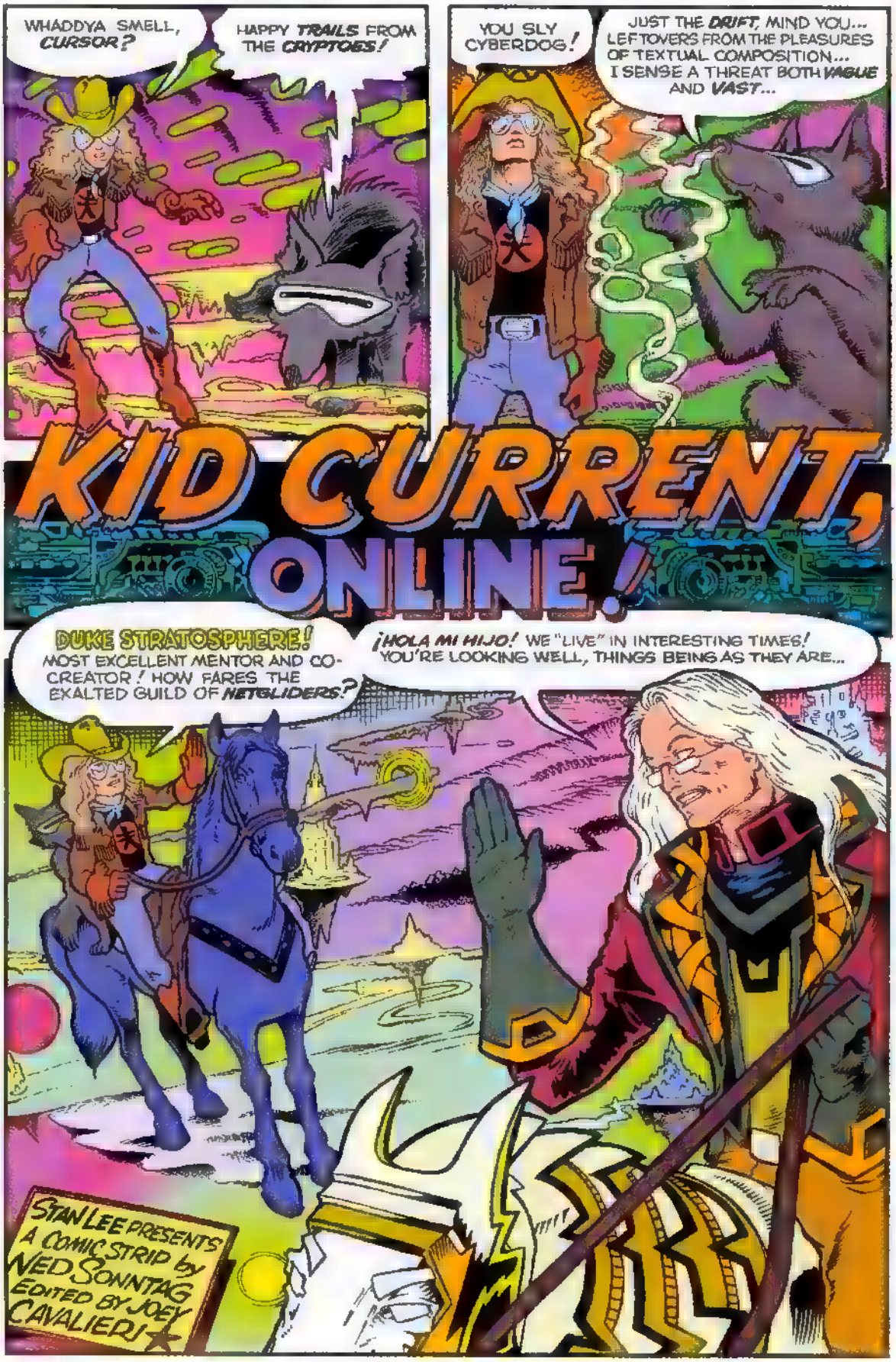
IT'S THEM. THE GENETICALLY FLAWED. THE ONES WE'RE KEEPING ALIVE SO THAT THEY CAN PERPETUATE THEIR ILLNESSES. THEY'RE THE ENEMY! THEY'RE WHAT'S HOLDING US BACK!
OKAY--HE'S ADAPTING TO THE COLD...
...LET'S SEE HOW MUCH OF IT HE CAN TAKE!
BEEP
BAD MISTAKE!
KRAK!K
AAAA!
I LIKE THE COLD!
I'VE GROWN ACCUSTOMED IT-- MILLIONS OF YEARS EVOLUTION... COMPRESSED INTO MOMENTS!
BRACK!
WHILE YOU'RE SIMPLY ABOUT TO BECOME... EXTINCT!
H-HE MAY B-BE RIGHT... CAN B-BARELY MOVE...

JOIN ME, SPIDER-MAN!
KZUDD
WITH THE DNA SCANNER, WE'LL BE ABLE TO FINALLY WEED THE GARDEN OF HUMANITY!
JOIN ME-- AND I'LL SPARE YOUR LIFE!
WHAT'S THE B-BENEFITS PACKAGE... ...LIKE...?
YOU MOCK ME?!
WHUMP
THUD
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D LACK THE VISION!
M-MAYBE. THEN AGAIN...
WHUNK
...M-MAYBE MY V-VISION'S WORKING J-JUST FINE...
THIS... ...IS IT...
...M-MUTIE'S BECOME W-WELL ADAPTED TO C-COLD...
BUT C-CAN HANDLE--

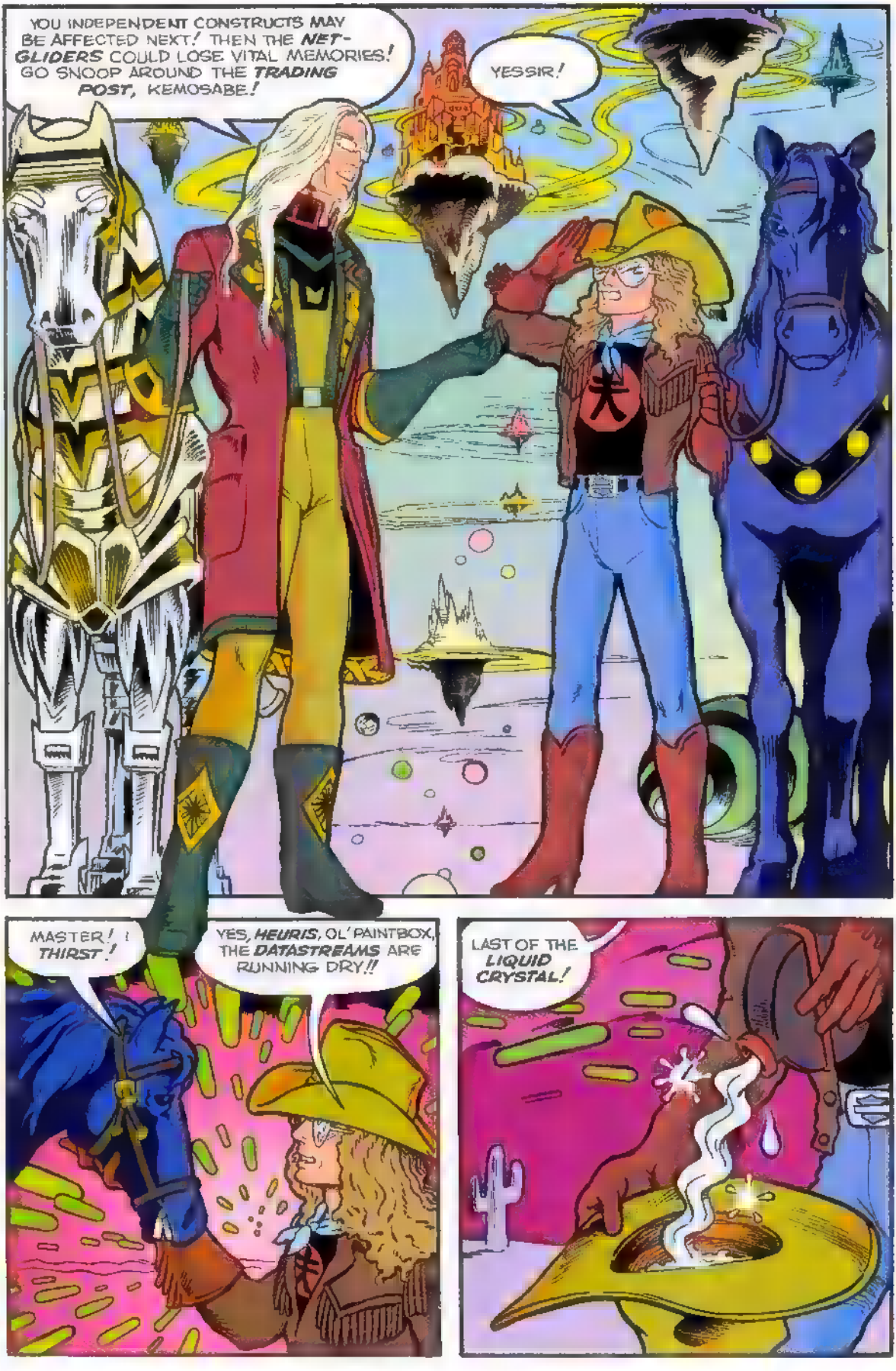
--SOME HEAT!!
KRAKK
FWOOM!
KSSH
AAAARRRGHHH!!
AAAAARGH!
GOTTA MOVE!
ANNA'S STILL OUT OF IT--
I WONDER IF MUTAGEN IS, TOO!
NO WAY ARE WE WAITING AROUND TO FIND OUT, THOUGH--

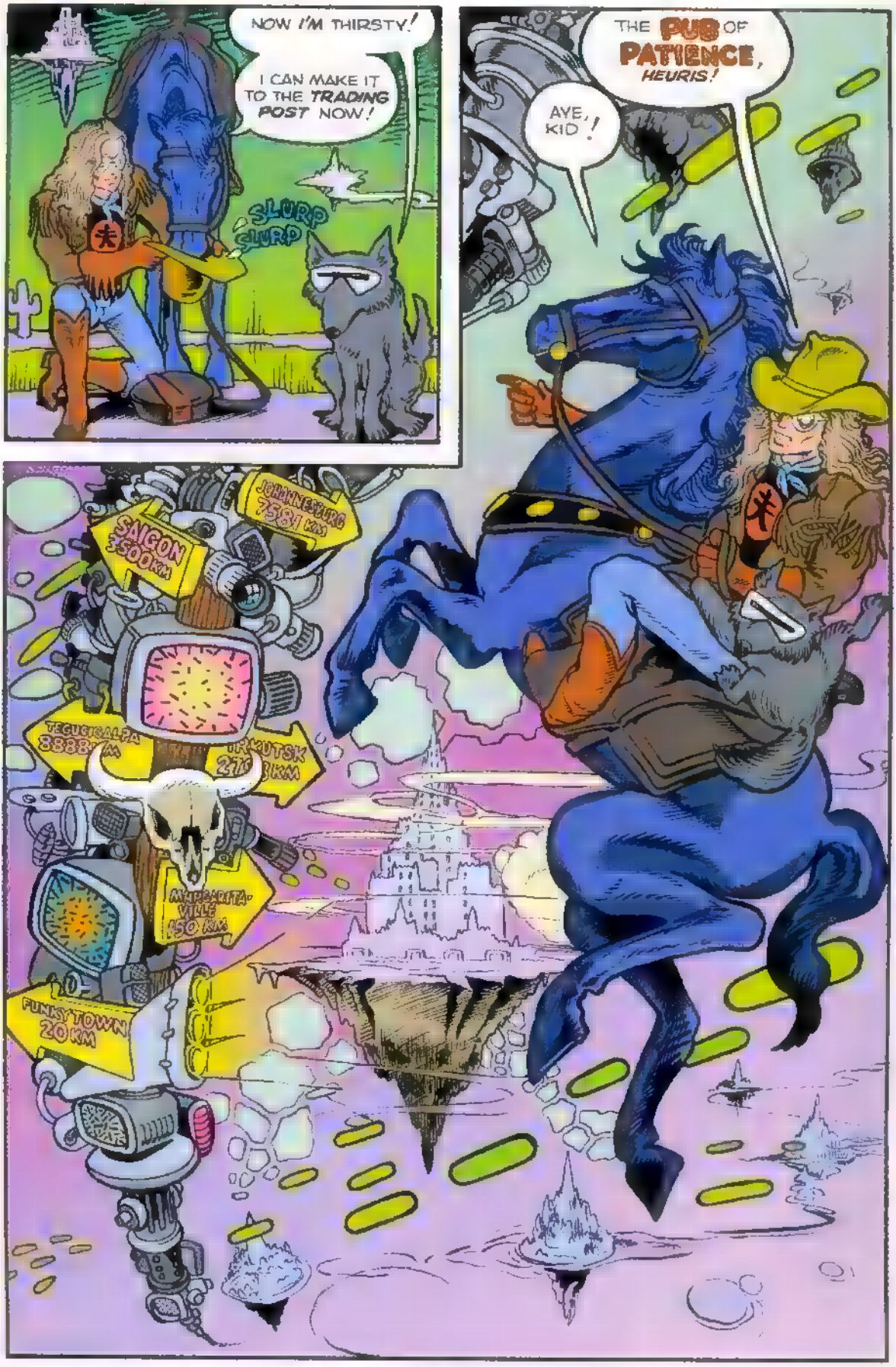

-- 'CAUSE THIS LAB IS ABOUT TO GO UP IN FLAMES!
HOLD ON, ANNA, NEXT STOP, HOOP HOSPITAL.
FAR BELOW...
AH.
FINALLY.
DNA Portascan
Helix Systems
"PROTOTYPE"


KOOP MEMORIAL HOSPITAL... THAT NIGHT...
SO HOWYA FEELIN', SIS?
STILL A LITTLE SHAKY, CARRIE.
STILL CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT HAPPENED IN THE HOUR [redacted] SO BEFORE MUTAGEN [redacted] ME.
THE [redacted] TELL [redacted] THAT'S TYPICAL OF HEAD TRAUMA, BUT THEY SAY THEY MAY [redacted] ABLE [redacted] HELP ME RETRIEVE SOME [redacted] MY MEMORY...
WHY BOTHER? ...er... ALREADY TOLD YOU EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED.
IF YOU SAY SO, MIGUEL.
[redacted] THE WAY, DID THEY EVER FIND THAT MUTAGEN CHARACTER IN THE HELIX BUILDING?
NO. AND... WE DON'T KNOW IF HE GOT WHATEVER IT WAS [redacted] WAS LOOKING FOR, TOO.
S'OKAY, SIS. YOU'RE SAFE NOW... THAT'S ALL WE NEED TO WORRY ABOUT. TELL HER, MIGUEL.
SHE'S RIGHT, ANNA.
THAT'S ALL WE NEED TO WORRY ABOUT.
END

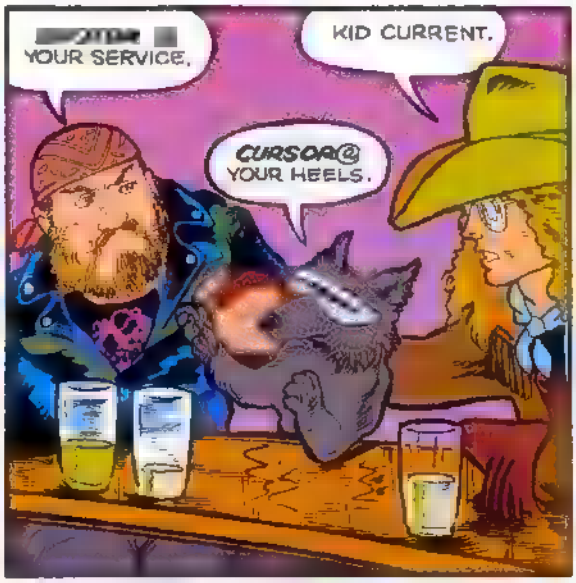

WHADDYA SMELL, CURSOR?
HAPPY TRAILS FROM THE CRYPTOGS!
YOU SLY CYBERDOG!
JUST THE DRIFT, MIND YOU... LEFTOVERS FROM THE PLEASURES OF TEXTUAL COMPOSITION... I SENSE A THREAT BOTH VAGUE AND VAST...
KID CURRENT, ONLINE!
DUKE STRATOSPHERE! MOST EXCELLENT MENTOR AND CO-CREATOR! HOW FARES THE EXALTED GUILD OF NETGLIDERS?
¡HOLA MI HIJO! WE "LIVE" IN INTERESTING TIMES! YOU'RE LOOKING WELL, THINGS BEING AS THEY ARE...
STAN LEE PRESENTS A COMIC STRIP by NED SONNTAG EDITED BY JOEY CAVALIERI

YOU RECALL MY SIDEKICK SCRAPPY... C'MON, SAY HI TO THE DUKE, YOU MANGY POLECAT...
YES! MOST ASTONISHING! WE CREATED YOU AND YOU MADE SCRAPPY! CREATURES WITH NO ANALOGS OUTSIDE THE NET!
YII!! M' MULE!
POP!
KID! I'M DE-REZZING!
LITTLE BUDDY! DON'T LEAVE ME!
OH SCRAPPY! I MUST'VE BLOWN THE MATH!
I SAY THEE NAY!
THE SURFACE DWELLERS - THOSE WHO SPEAK BY FLAPPING THEIR FACE-MEAT... ARE MONKEYING AROUND WITH EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD ... THE VERY CONTEXT THAT INFORMS CYBERSPACE!

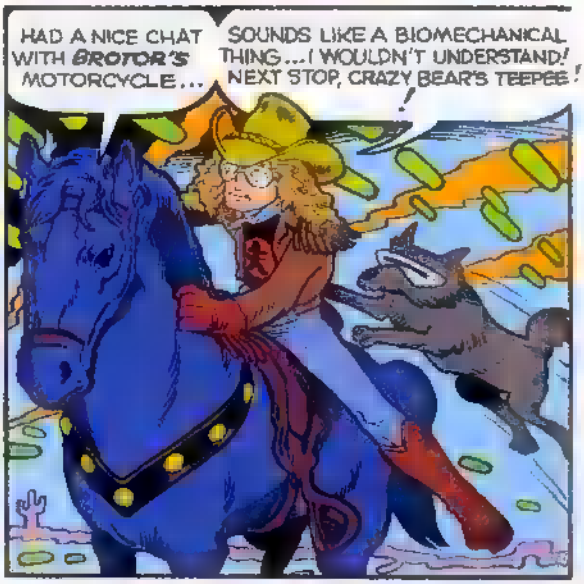

YOU INDEPENDENT CONSTRUCTS MAY BE AFFECTED NEXT! THEN THE NET-GLIDERS COULD LOSE VITAL MEMORIES! GO SNOOP AROUND THE TRADING POST, KEMOSABE!
YESSIR!
MASTER! I THIRST!
YES, HEURIS, OL' PAINTBOX, THE DATASTREAMS ARE RUNNING DRY!!
LAST OF THE LIQUID CRYSTAL!


NOW I'M THIRSTY!
I CAN MAKE IT TO THE TRADING POST NOW!
SLURP SLURP
THE PUB OF PATIENCE, HEURIS!
AYE, KID!
SAIGON 7500 KM
JOHANNESBURG 7581 KM
TEGUCIGALPA 8883 KM
IRKUTSK 27K 3KM
MARGARITA-VILLE 450 KM
FUNKY TOWN 20 KM

GLASS O' MILK, KID?
AND ONE FOR THE DOG, PATIENCE!
I WARN YOU, PRICES HAVE SKYROCKETED!
BLIP!
A MAN COULD WISH FOR SOMETHING STRONGER, THINGS BEING [redacted] ARE.
A BIKER APPEARS ABRUPTLY, AS CYBERPEOPLE WILL...
YOU SPEAK AS ONE WHO'D ONCE BEEN A MAN OF MEAT...
AYE! BEFORE I WAS A CONSTRUCT I WAS A CONVICT!
MISS IT?
THE SMELL OF MOTOR OIL AND LEATHER, YEAH... AND DOWNLOADING REQUIRED NO INTELLIGENCE.
WANNABE A [redacted] DOG.
CUT THE GROUSING YOU TWO! CYBERLAND IN ITSELF IS A CONTINUAL SOURCE OF INTOXICATION... [redacted] YET ONE'S WITS MUST REMAIN RAZOR-SHARP!


[redacted] YOUR SERVICE.
KID CURRENT.
CURSOR@ YOUR HEELS.

HE'S SURVEILLING YOU.
I KNOW... THAT'S WHAT WE DO...

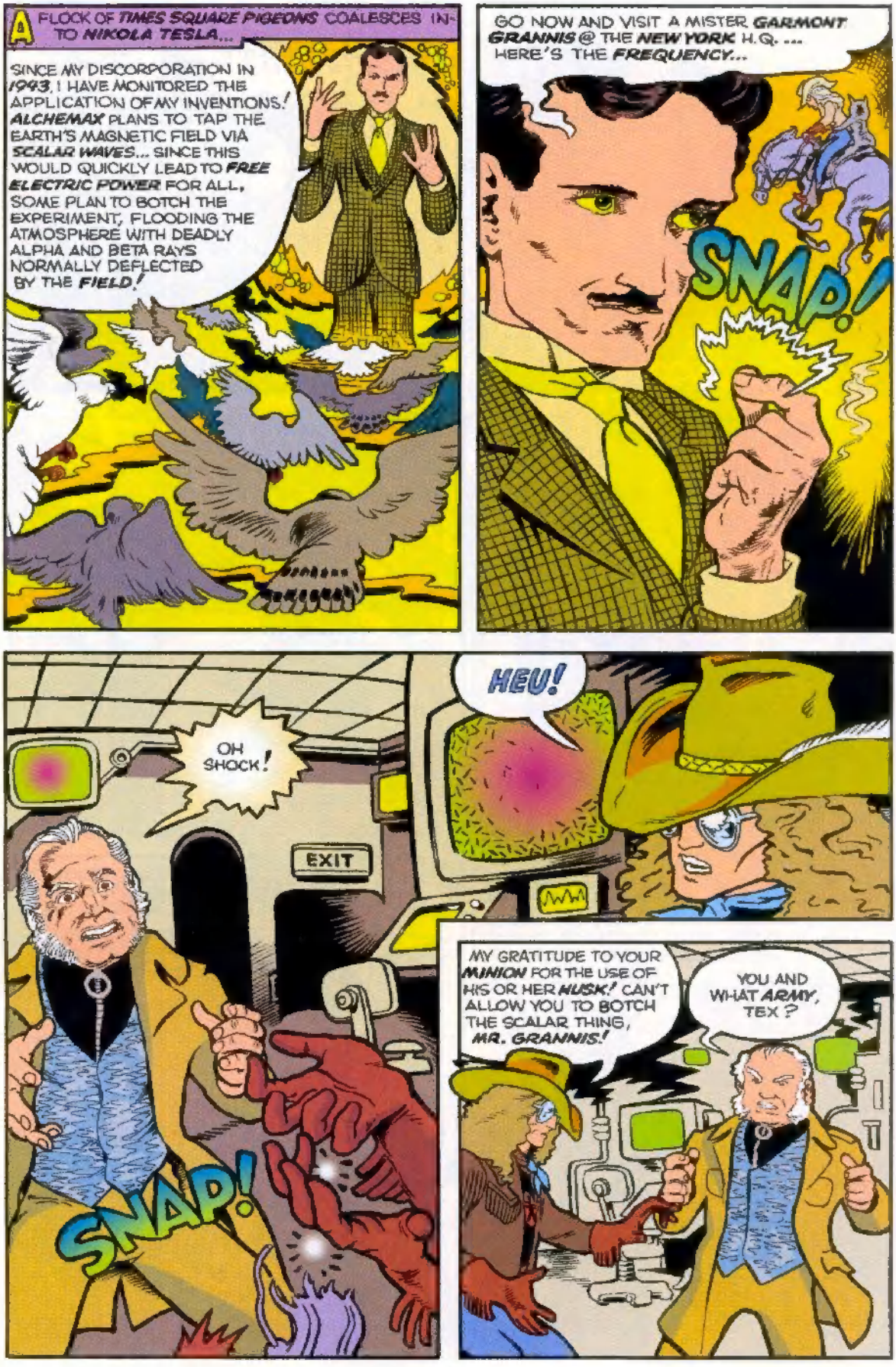

HAD A NICE CHAT WITH BROTOR'S MOTORCYCLE...
SOUNDS LIKE A BIOMECHANICAL THING... I WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND! NEXT STOP, CRAZY BEAR'S TEEPEE!

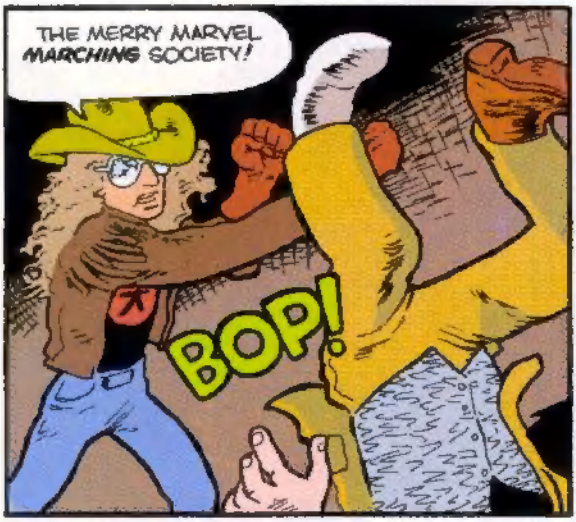
HORSEMAN! ...A WORD BEFORE YOU GO!
QUEEN CREOLE! THIS IS SERIOUS!

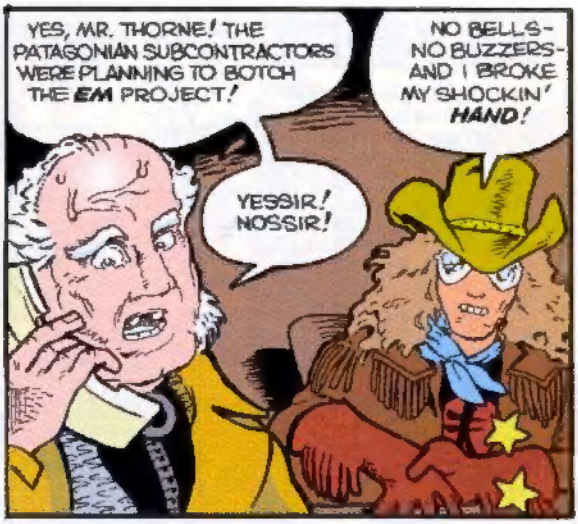
AS MESSENGERS WE RECEIVE A BIT OF SUSTENANCE WITH EACH JOB... YOU'VE FELT THE PINCH... THE MEAT PEOPLE, THE OUTSIDERS, ARE HIDING SOMETHING!

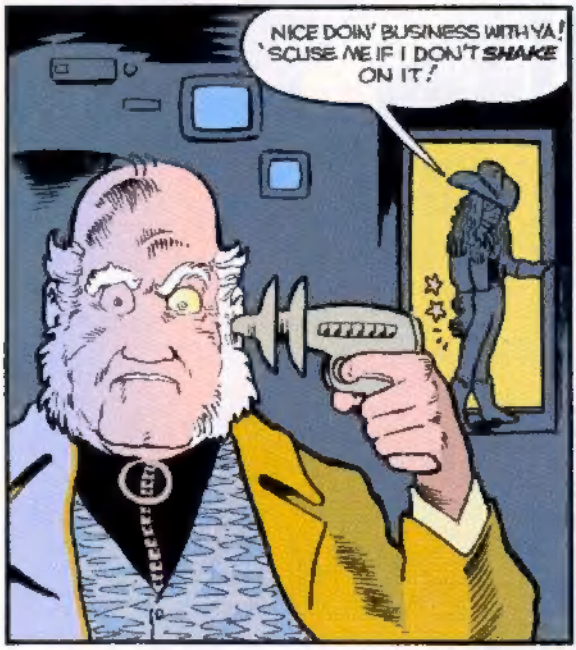
QUEEN, IS THERE A SPELL THAT I MIGHT TAKE ON A MEAT BODY AND WALK AMONG MEN?
WITH THE AID OF [redacted] YOU MIGHT RIDE [redacted] MAN AS A MAN RIDES A HORSE!

CRAZY BEAR! I NEED TO USE THE 'SCOPE!
THAT'LL COST YA... A COUNTRY-PUNK TUNE ON YOUR FINE OLD GIBSON!
AH'M A-HEADED FOR THE LAST ROUND-UP...
AND SO...
I GRANT YOU A FEW MOMENTS IN MEATWORLD TO CALM THE VIBRATIONS...
FIRST, ONE OF THE DEAD WISHES TO ADDRESS YOU.
VIRTUAL VOODOO!
MEANWHILE IN THE MEATWORLD...
I WANT YOU TO GET IN THERE AND SEE WHAT THEY KNOW...
CYBERDYNE MAX
WE'RE BECOMING TOO DEPENDENT ON THESE CONSTRUCTS! THE QUESTION OF THEIR UNINTERRUPTED EXISTENCE CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO INTERFERE WITH OUR PLANS!
EXIT
I ♥ NY


A FLOCK OF TIMES SQUARE PIGEONS COALESCES INTO NIKOLA TESLA...
SINCE MY DISCORPORATION IN 1943, I HAVE MONITORED THE APPLICATION OF MY INVENTIONS! ALCHEMAX PLANS TO TAP THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD VIA SCALAR WAVES... SINCE THIS WOULD QUICKLY LEAD TO FREE ELECTRIC POWER FOR ALL, SOME PLAN TO BOTCH THE EXPERIMENT, FLOODING THE ATMOSPHERE WITH DEADLY ALPHA AND BETA RAYS NORMALLY DEFLECTED BY THE FIELD!
GO NOW AND VISIT A MISTER GARMONT GRANNIS @ THE NEW YORK H.Q. .... HERE'S THE FREQUENCY...
SNAP!
HEU!
OH SHOCK!
EXIT
SNAP!
MY GRATITUDE TO YOUR MINION FOR THE USE OF HIS OR HER HUSK! CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO BOTCH THE SCALAR THING, MR. GRANNIS!
YOU AND WHAT ARMY, TEX?


THE MERRY MARVEL MARCHING SOCIETY!
BOP!

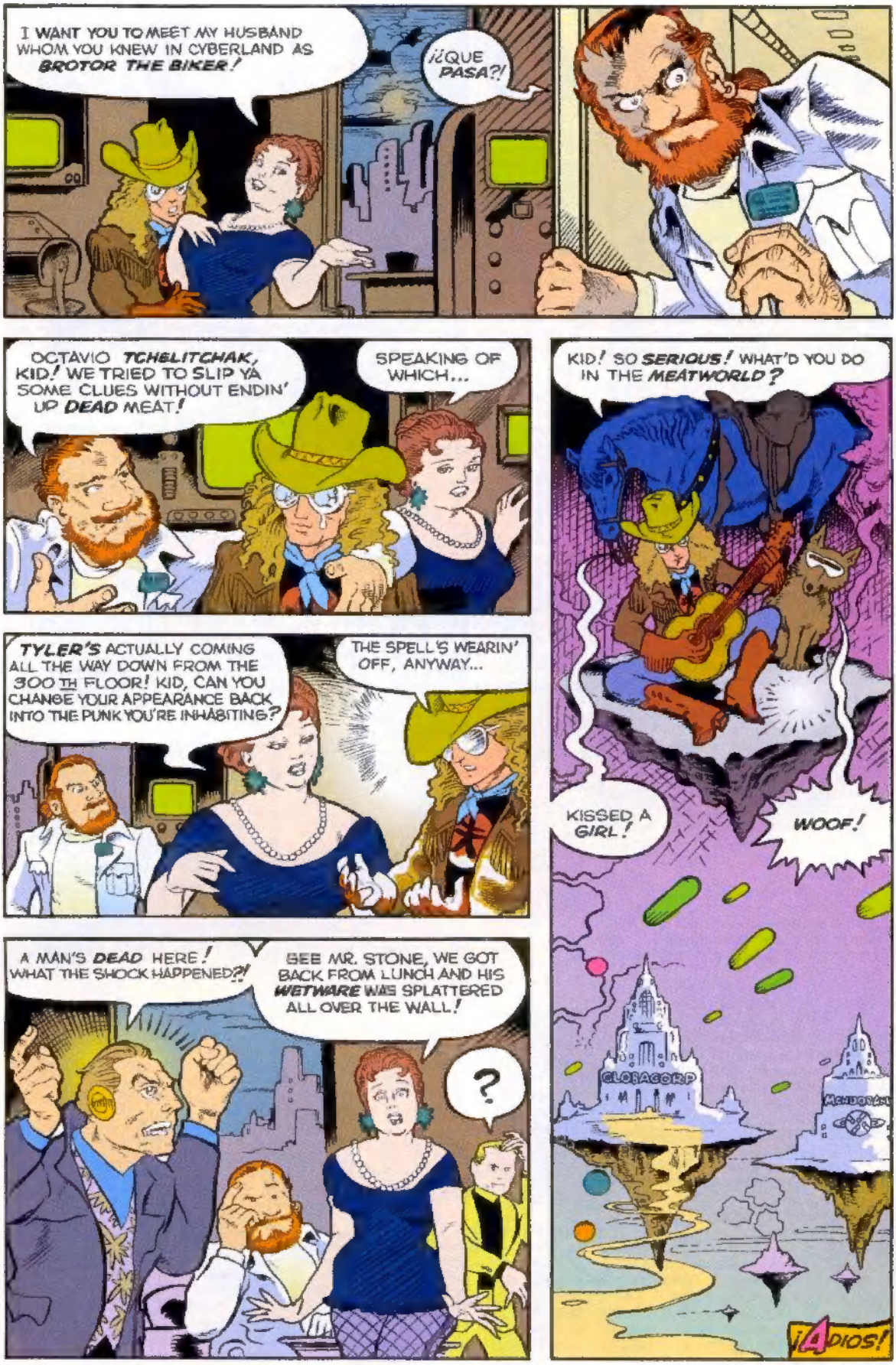

YES, MR. THORNE! THE PATAGONIAN SUBCONTRACTORS WERE PLANNING TO BOTCH THE EM PROJECT!
NO BELLS- NO BUZZERS- AND I BROKE MY SHOCKIN' HAND!
YESSIR! NOSSIR!


NICE DOIN' BUSINESS WITH YA! 'SCUSE ME IF I DON'T SHAKE ON IT!

FOOSH!
YIPES! BETTER HIDE!
KID! WAIT!

I'M LENI KALEHALEHA OPERATOR OF THE "MILKBARMAID" CONSTRUCT! THE CYBERNETIC COMMUNITY THANKS YOU!

WOW! LET'S GO INTO THE GENERATOR ROOM FOR SOME SHOCK THERAPY!
YOUR MIRROR-SHADES ARE ALL STEAMED!
Thump Thump


I WANT YOU TO MEET MY HUSBAND WHOM YOU KNEW IN CYBERLAND AS BROTOR THE BIKER!
¡¿QUE PASA?!
OCTAVIO TCHELITCHAK, KID! WE TRIED TO SLIP YA SOME CLUES WITHOUT ENDIN' UP DEAD MEAT!
SPEAKING OF WHICH...
TYLER'S ACTUALLY COMING ALL THE WAY DOWN FROM THE 300 TH FLOOR! KID, CAN YOU CHANGE YOUR APPEARANCE BACK INTO THE PUNK YOU'RE INHABITING?
THE SPELL'S WEARIN' OFF, ANYWAY...
A MAN'S DEAD HERE! WHAT THE SHOCK HAPPENED?!
SEE MR. STONE, WE GOT BACK FROM LUNCH AND HIS WETWARE WAS SPLATTERED ALL OVER THE WALL!
?
KID! SO SERIOUS! WHAT'D YOU DO IN THE MEATWORLD?
KISSED A GIRL!
WOOF!
GLOBACORP
¡ADIOS!